

Badger Pass Ski Area, Source: Kenny Karst, 2008.

*Determination of Eligibility
Final – August 13, 2009*

*Badger Pass Ski Area
Yosemite National Park, California*

August 2009

*Prepared for
Delaware North Company
Yosemite National Park, California*

Prepared by
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December 29, 2009

In reply refer to: NPS091019A

David V. Uberuaga
Acting Superintendent
Yosemite National Park
P.O. Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389

Re: Determination of Eligibility for Badger Pass Ski Area, Yosemite National Park

Dear Mr. Uberuaga:

Thank you for your letter dated October 13, 2009, requesting my comment and concurrence for the Determination of Eligibility for Badger Pass Ski Area in Yosemite National Park. You are consulting with me in order to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470f), as amended, and its implementing regulation at 36 CFR Part 800. Along with your letter, you submitted the following report to support your determination of eligibility:

- *Determination of Eligibility, Badger Pass Ski Area, Yosemite National Park, 100% SHPO Review Draft*, prepared for the National Park Service (NPS) by Page & Turnbull, Inc., August 13, 2009.

In this report, NPS concludes that Badger Pass Ski Area is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Resources (NRHP) under Criterion A in the context of Tourism, Recreation, and Preservation Ethic, as one of California's earliest developed downhill ski areas. The period of significance for the site is 1934 to 1953, which coincides with the beginning of development for recreation in the area and ends with a shift from an important site of regional and national skiing competitions to a family-oriented ski area. NPS defined several features that contribute to the site's significance, including:

Contributing Buildings and Structures:

- Badger Pass Ski Lodge
- NPS Ranger Residence

Contributing Landscape Characteristics (described in detail in the 2009 report):

- Natural systems and features
 - Monroe Meadow
 - Grouse Creek
 - Little Half Dome
 - Spring
 - Wetlands
 - Rock outcrops
 - Old Badger Pass Summit
- Spatial organization
- Land use (original ski runs developed in 1935)
- Circulation features

- Badger Pass Access Road
 - Original Parking Loop
 - 1941 Parking Loop (Expansion 1)
 - Snowshoe Trail
 - Old Glacier Point Road Cross Country Ski Trail
 - Trailhead to Glacier Point Road Cross Country Ski Trail
- Topography
- Vegetation
 - Monroe Meadow
 - Stands of Conifers at boundary
 - Plantings between ski runs
 - Screen plantings around Parking Loops
- Views and vistas
 - Vista from Badger Pass Access Road to Lodge upon entry
 - View from Badger Pass Ski Lodge to slopes
 - Views from slopes to Badger Pass Ski Lodge
 - View from Old Badger Pass Summit to surrounding landscape
 - View from top of Eagle Ski Run to surrounding landscape
 - View from top of Badger Ski Run to surrounding landscape

NPS has identified the following as **non-contributing buildings and structures**:

- Water Tower
- NPS Ranger Station
- Cross-Country Equipment Rental Buildings
- Maintenance Garage and storage containers
- Maintenance Shed
- NPS Weather Station
- NASTAR shack-start point
- NASTAR shack-end point
- Badger Pups Barn
- Lift Operator House #1 (Red Fox Run)
- Lift Operator House #2 (Badger Run)
- Badger Double-Chair Lift
- Red Fox Double-Chair Lift
- Turtle Rope Tow
- Bruin Double-Chair Lift
- Eagle Triple-Chair Lift

I concur with the determination of eligibility for Badger Pass Ski Area historic site and with the NPS-defined contributing and non-contributing features.

Thank you for seeking my comments and considering historic properties as part of your planning. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mark Beason, Project Review Unit historian, at (916) 653-8902 or mbeason@parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Susan K Shattuck for

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer

The authors would like to thank all those who contributed to the development and completion of this report, including:

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Landscape Description

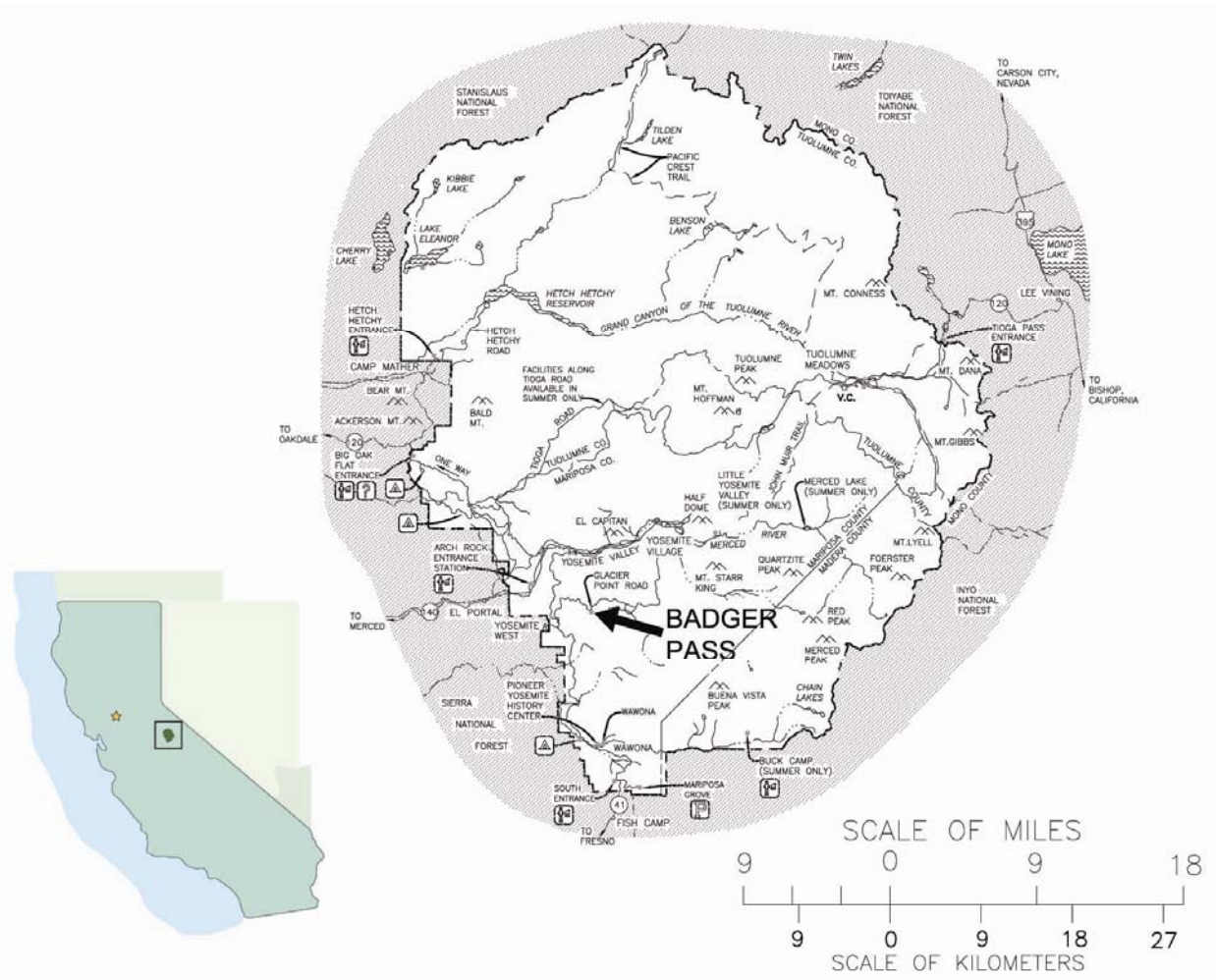
The Badger Pass Ski Area is a 282-acre winter sports facility, located along the south rim of the Yosemite Valley along Glacier Point Road. The ski area is part of a large geographic and cultural area—the Glacier Point Road Historic District. This district includes three developed areas—Glacier Point, Bridalveil Creek Campground, and Badger Pass Ski Area—which are identified in the Glacier Point Road Cultural Landscape Inventory as “sites within the district whose contribution will be determined at a future point.”¹ The Badger Pass Ski Area is most appropriately documented as a historic site, as the location of a pattern of significance events.

The Badger Pass Ski Area, located at an elevation range of approximately 7,200 feet to 7,800 feet, is characterized by rolling, north-facing mountain peaks lined with stands of conifers leading to a protected meadow below. The location of Badger Pass is an important component of its significance, as a recreational site that developed due to its unique geography, topography, and natural systems and features. The site includes fourteen buildings and structures, two of which were constructed during the period of significance, which extends from 1934 to 1953. The site appears to be eligible as a historic site for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A (Event) for its association with the development of winter sports recreation in Yosemite in the early twentieth century.

Today, Badger Pass continues to be actively used as a ski area and remains an important recreational amenity within Yosemite National Park. The Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Yosemite’s first concessionaire, constructed the Badger Pass Ski Area. Delaware North Companies (DNC) now operates the ski area during the winter months, and coordinates facility maintenance and development with the National Park Service (NPS). The Badger Pass Ski Area is comprised of the following landscape characteristics, which contribute to the historic significance of the site: natural systems and features, spatial organization, land use, circulation, topography, vegetation, buildings and structures, and views and vistas. The site retains sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association to convey its historical significance as one of California’s first developed downhill ski areas.

1 U.S. Department of the Interior, *Glacier Point Road CLI*, Yosemite National Park, August 2007, 2

Location Map



Location Map: General location of Badger Pass Ski Area within Yosemite National Park

Boundary Description

Boundary Justification

The boundary for the Badger Pass Ski Area encompasses the entire 282-acre developed ski area as well as the Badger Pass Access Road from Glacier Point Road to the site, as indicated on the Badger Pass Ski Area GPS Survey Map on page 5. The historic site boundary encompasses all of the historically significant features at Badger Pass and does not extend into any designated wilderness area.

Verbal Description

Beginning at the junction of Glacier Point Road and the Badger Pass Access Road (Point A on the Badger Pass Ski Area GPS Survey Map on page 5), the ski area boundary includes the intersection of these two roads and the entire Badger Pass Access Road and its associated features. These features are contained within a 100-foot-wide corridor along the access road that extends south from Glacier Point Road to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and Original Parking Loop. The boundary continues along the western edge of the parking area, follows the extent of the parking area, and includes a 100-foot-wide corridor to the north of the parking area.² The boundary joins a maintenance road at the east side of the parking area (Point B) and follows this road to the northeast. The boundary continues to the northeast along the maintenance road and includes the area approximately 100 feet to the northwest of this road (Points C and D). At Point D, the boundary turns and follows the Snowshoe Trail southeast along the tree line along the ridge to the top of the Eagle and Red Fox ski lifts and is marked by signage indicating this trail (Points E to N). The southern extent of the boundary loops around and includes the tops of the Eagle and Red Fox ski lifts (Point O). The boundary continues from the top of the Eagle and Red Fox ski lifts northwest along the ridge line of the ski slopes at the southwestern portion of the site, and is marked by ski area boundary signs in this area (Points P to R). The boundary continues northwest to the top of the Gray Owl and Bruin Ski Runs (Point S) and then continues eastward along the tree line and west of the maintenance area at the northwest portion of the site (Point T). The boundary crosses Grouse Creek north of the maintenance area, and continues north back to the junction of the Glacier Point Road and the Badger Pass Access Road (Point A).

2 This 100-foot-wide corridor is included as part of the boundary to comprise contributing features that are located in this area, including the Trailhead to Glacier Point Road Cross Country Trail.

15/09 1620 SMITH_P17 F:BADGER PASS:CURRENT SET-BADGER PASS:UP-BADGER PASS SITE PLAN.DWG
XREFS:GPS_AUG21.LINE.DWG:GPS_AUG20_POINTS.DWG:GPS_AUG21_POINTS.DWG:K:BADGERBASEMAP2005\GIS\INFO_2008-07-22.DWG:WETLANDS_NAD27_SF3.DWG:LX-BADGER PASS HATCHES ONLY-FORSET.DWG:



GPS BOUNDARY UTM's		
ID	Easting	Northing
A	264943	4171906
B	265266	4171792
C	265990	4172135
D	266167	4172287
E	266280	4172201
F	266147	4172083
G	266011	4171728
H	265809	4171571
I	265629	4171259
J	265517	4171083
K	265548	4170972
L	265447	4170921
M	265449	4170753
N	265523	4170663
O	265476	4170627
P	265389	4170766
Q	265133	4171219
R	264850	4171241
S	264381	4171484
T	264827	4171688



DESIGNED:
C. PATTILLO
JAB
J. SMITH
TECH. REVIEW:

DATE:
7/9/09

SUB SHEET NO.

TITLE OF SHEET
**BADGER PASS
SKI AREA
GPS SURVEY MAP**
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

DRAWING NO.
L-3

PMIS/PKG NO.

SHEET
3 OF **3**

Table of Selected Site Boundary Coordinates

Point	UTM Coord. East	UTM Coord. North
A	264943	4171906
B	265266	4171792
C	265990	4172135
D	266167	4172287
E	266280	4172201
F	266147	4172083
G	266011	4171728
H	265809	4171571
I	265629	4171259
J	265517	4171083
K	265548	4170972
L	265447	4170921
M	265449	4170753
N	265523	4170663
O	265476	4170627
P	265389	4170766
Q	265133	4171219
R	264850	4171241
S	264381	4171484
T	264827	4171688

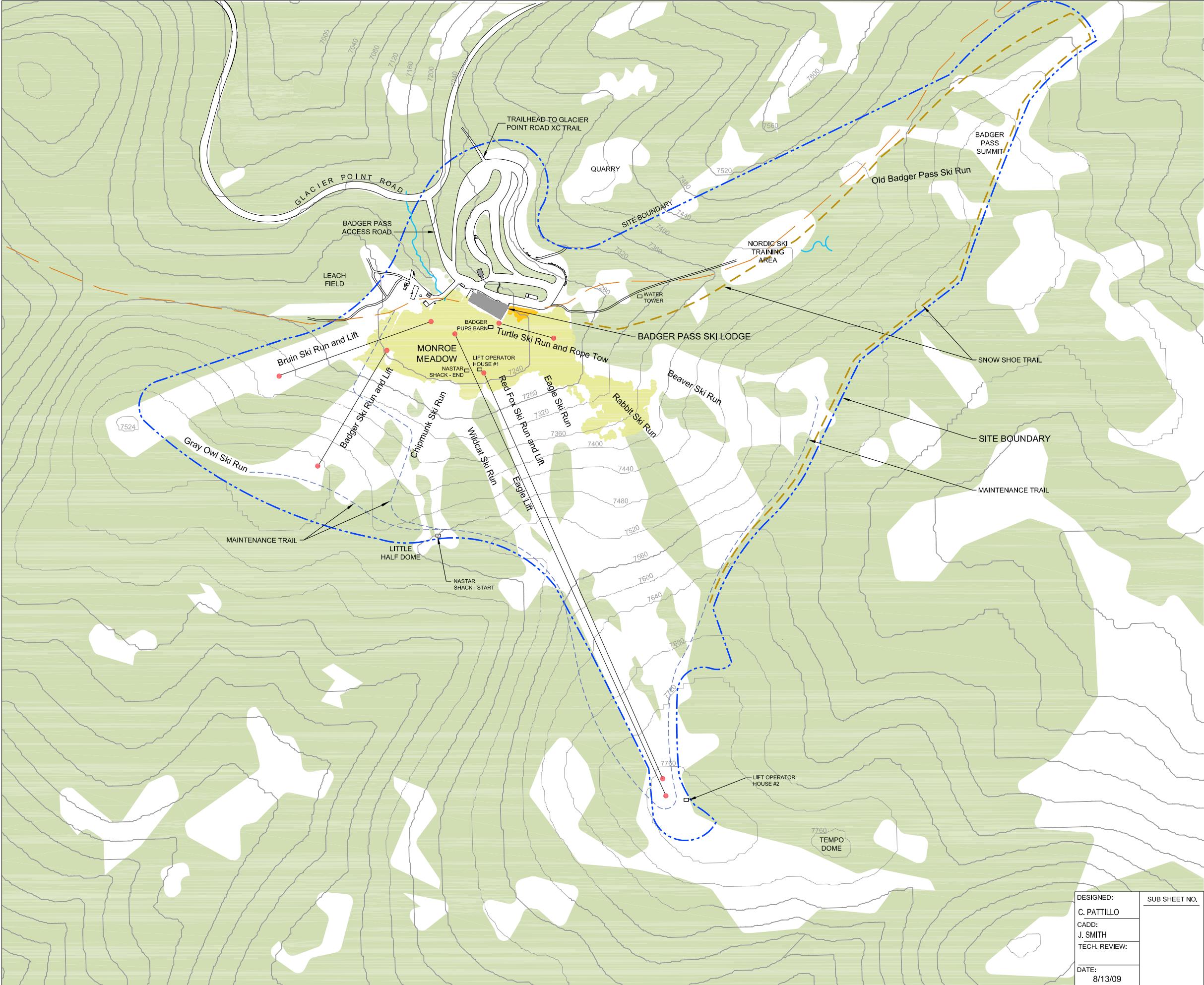
Boundary UTM Source: GPS-Uncorrected

Boundary UTM Type: Line

Boundary UTM Datum: NAD 83

Boundary UTM Zone: 11

1/500 1520 SMITH R17 F:\BADGER\8\DWG - BADGER PASS\CURRENT SET\BADGER PASS\UP-BADGER PASS SITE PLAN.DWG XREFS:GPS_AUG21_L1.DWG:GPS_AUG20_POINTS.DWG:GPS_AUG21_POINTS.DWG:LY4-BADGERBASEMAP2005\GSI\INFO_2008-07-22.DWG:WETLANDS_NAD27_SP3.DWG:LY4-BADGER PASS HATCHES ONLY\F-FOREST.DWG:



KEY

- SKI LIFT
- SITE BOUNDARY
- GROUSE CREEK
- SPRING
- ROCK OUTCROP
- SNOW SHOE TRAIL
- MAINTENANCE TRAIL
- OLD GLACIER POINT ROAD
- CONTRIBUTING FEATURES
- NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES
- RED FIR FOREST
- WILLOW THICKET
- HERBACEOUS WETLAND

280 0 280 560

SCALE OF FEET

DESIGNED:
C. PATTILLO
CADD:
J. SMITH
TECH. REVIEW:
DATE:
8/13/09

SUB SHEET NO.

TITLE OF SHEET
**BADGER PASS
SKI AREA**
EXISTING CONDITIONS
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

DRAWING NO.
L-1
PMIS/PKG NO.
SHEET
1 OF **3**



- KEY
- 1 BADGER PASS SKI LODGE
 - 2 RANGER RESIDENCE
 - 3 CROSS COUNTRY SKI RENTAL
 - 4 STORAGE CONTAINER
 - 5 MAINTENANCE / FUEL STORAGE
 - 6 MAINTENANCE SHED
 - 7 RANGER STATION
 - 8 MAINTENANCE GARAGE
 - 9 OFF SEASON PORTABLE
 - 10 WATER TOWER
 - 11 WEATHER STATION
 - 12 CROSS COUNTRY TRAIL
 - 13 TRAILHEAD TO GLACIER POINT ROAD XC TRAIL
 - 14 OLD GLACIER POINT ROAD XC TRAIL
 - 15 BADGER PASS ACCESS ROAD
 - 16 ORIGINAL PARKING LOOP (1936)
 - 17 1941 PARKING LOOP
 - 18 1958 PARKING LOOP
 - 19 CA. 1987 PARKING LOOP
 - 20 ROAD TO MAINTENANCE YARD
 - 21 MAINTENANCE TRAIL
 - 22 SNOW SHOE TRAIL
 - 23 MAINTENANCE ROAD
 - 24 SITE BOUNDARY
 - 25 OLD GLACIER POINT ROAD
 - 26 ROCK OUTCROP
 - 27 SKI LIFT
 - 28 RED FIR FOREST
 - 29 WILLOW THICKET
 - 30 HERBACEOUS WETLAND
 - 31 GROUSE CREEK
 - 32 CONTRIBUTING FEATURES
 - 33 NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES

80 0 80 160
SCALE OF FEET

DESIGNED:
C. PATTILLO
CADD:
J. SMITH
TECH. REVIEW:
DATE:
8/13/09

SUB SHEET NO.

TITLE OF SHEET
**BADGER PASS
SKI AREA**
EXISTING CONDITIONS DETAIL
YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

DRAWING NO.
L-2

PMIS/PKG NO.

SHEET
2 OF 3

National Register Information

National Register Documentation: Undocumented

Explanatory Narrative: The Badger Pass Ski Area has not previously been documented or formally evaluated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The historic resource study completed by the NPS in 1987 informally evaluated the Badger Pass Ski lodge as ineligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to a lack of historical or architectural significance.³ This study was not sent to the SHPO for concurrence and did not serve as a DOE for the property.

The Badger Pass Ski Area was identified as a historic site within the Glacier Point Road historic district according to the Glacier Point Road Cultural Landscape Inventory completed in 2007. This document was concurred upon by the SHPO in 2007 and serves as a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) for the Glacier Point Road historic district. The Glacier Point Road DOE identifies Badger Pass, Bridalveil Campground and Glacier Point as developed areas within the Glacier Point Road historic district. According to the Glacier Point Road DOE:

These areas were destinations along a spur road whose only function was access to the destinations, and they were planned, designed, and developed in concert with the development of the travel corridor. As elements of the master planning effort and as representations of the naturalistic landscape design principles that guided the development of Glacier Point Road, these areas are included within the boundary of the [Glacier Point Road] historic district. Yet while the development of these areas was integral to the development of Glacier Point Road, each is distinct and complex enough to merit analysis as a separate landscape. So although these areas are within the boundary of the Glacier Point Road historic district, they should be considered individual sites whose features will be documented and assessed and whose contribution to the larger district will be determined at a future time.⁴

The Badger Pass Ski Area DOE outlined in this document provides the follow up research on Badger Pass called for in the Glacier Point Road CLI and marks the first official documentation of the site's potential eligibility for inclusion in the National Register. Currently, the site is being documented at the local level of significance for the purposes of the DOE, but the site may have greater significance at the local level.

3 Linda Greene, *Yosemite: The Park and its Resources* (1987): 1052.
http://www.yosemite.ca.us/library/yosemite_resources/properties.html [accessed September 18, 2008]

4 U.S. Department of the Interior, *Glacier Point Road CLI*, 4.

NRIS Number: n/a
Primary Certification Date: n/a
Name in National Register: n/a
Other Names: n/a

National Register Eligibility: Undetermined

Date of Eligibility Determination: TBD

National Register Classification: Site

Significance Level: Local

Contributing/Individual: Individual

Significance Criterion: A

National Register Period of Significance

Start Year: 1934

Start Era: AD

End Year: 1953

End Era: AD

Historic Context Theme

Historic Context Theme: Tourism, Recreation and Preservation Ethic

National Register Areas of Significance

Category: Entertainment/Recreation

National Historic Landmark Information

National Historic Landmark Status: No

National Historic Landmark Date: n/a

National Historic Landmark Theme: n/a

World Heritage Site Information

World Heritage Site Status: No

World Heritage Site Date: n/a

World Heritage Category: n/a

Statement of Significance: n/a

Chronology

Year(s)	Event	Description
1882 A.D.	Built	The Glacier Point Road is first constructed.
1917 A.D.	Built	“Ash Can Alley” is constructed near Camp Curry in Yosemite Valley and becomes a popular sledding venue at Yosemite. The Camp Curry parking lot is flooded in winter to create an ice skating rink.
1926 A.D.	Built	The All-Weather Highway (State Route 140) is constructed and provides year-round access to Yosemite.
1931 A.D.	Planned	The first portion of the New Glacier Point Road is laid out from Chinquapin Flat to Bridalveil Creek.
1932 – 1933 A.D.	Established	A new ski area is established at Chinquapin, south of Yosemite Valley.
1932 – 1934 A.D.	Built	The Chinquapin to Bridalveil Creek portion of the New Glacier Point Road is constructed, providing access to the area around Badger Pass.
1933 A.D.	Established	First official reference in Yosemite Superintendent’s Reports noting skiing at the Badger Pass ski fields.
1933 A.D.	Built	The Wawona Tunnel is constructed. The Wawona Road between Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees is kept clear of snow for the first time during the winter season.
1933 – 1934 A.D.	Built	A service station is constructed at the Chinquapin ski area.
1934 A.D.	Built	An experimental electric ski tow, called the up-ski, is installed at Badger Pass in Monroe Meadow (in the location of what is now known as the Old Badger Pass Ski Run). Some areas are cleared for downhill ski runs.
1935 A.D.	Built	The Badger Pass Ski Lodge is designed by Eldridge T. Spencer and dedicated on December 15 th . The up-ski is improved and the Badger Pass Access Road is constructed.

Year(s)	Event	Description
1936 A.D.	Built	The Badger Pass parking loop is completed, providing parking for 200 vehicles.
1936 A.D.	Altered	A pair of sleds, named the “Queen Mary” and “Big Bertha,” are added to the up-ski.
1936 A.D.	Altered	The first of a series of alterations are made to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge. These alterations include an addition to the west façade that contained a ski fitting room and a shed-roofed porch. An addition was also made to the east façade. The deck on the south façade was extended to shelter a large locker room and waxing room below.
1938 A.D.	Altered	The Badger Pass Access Road is widened by the Civilian Conservation Corps.
1939 A.D.	Built	A temporary Ranger’s Station is added to the Badger Pass site.
1939 – 1940 A.D.	Built	The NPS Ranger Residence is constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps at Badger Pass and opens in 1940.
1940 – 1941 A.D.	Built	A Comfort Station is constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps for the NPS adjacent to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.
ca. 1941 A.D.	Built	By 1941, two rope tows are located at Badger Pass. Site improvements were also made at this time including widening and clearing of trails.
1941 A.D.	Built	The first parking expansion is completed, providing capacity for an additional 200 vehicles.
1941 A.D.	Built	A thirty-meter ski jump is constructed at Badger Pass.
ca. 1942 A.D.	Built	The water tower is constructed.
1946 A.D.	Altered	The up-ski is replaced by a T-Bar ski lift.
Ca. 1948 A.D.	Built	A third rope tow is constructed at Badger Pass.

Year(s)	Event	Description
1954 – 1956 A.D.	Altered	The second of a series of alterations is begun at the Badger Pass Ski Area. This work marks the first major renovation of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge from its original form. This renovation included the expansion of the existing building, and the addition of a new building, which incorporated the existing NPS comfort station.
1958 A.D.	Altered	The parking area at Badger Pass is expanded with the construction of an additional loop (expansion 2). This effort was part of the NPS's Mission 66 program.
1961 A.D.	Altered	The third of a series of alterations is completed at the Badger Pass Ski Lodge. These alterations include the reconfiguration of several interior spaces, enclosure of a portion of the south façade, and the addition of a snack bar to the circulation walkway between the original building and the 1954 building.
1963 A.D.	Abandoned	By 1963, nearly all ski competitions except junior races were dropped from the schedule at Badger Pass in deference to the NPS's desire to minimize spectator sports in national parks.
1964 A.D.	Built	A second T-Bar ski lift is installed at Badger Pass (located along the current Bruin Ski Run).
1968 A.D.	Altered	The fourth of a series of alterations is completed at the Badger Pass Ski Area. These alterations included the addition of a temporary ski rental building in Monroe Meadow near the southwest corner of the 1954 building.
ca. 1968 A.D.	Built	The NASTAR shacks are constructed.
1969 A.D.	Moved	NPS Ranger Station (A-frame building) is moved to Badger Pass from Foresta. This building is located to the southwest of the Ski Lodge in the maintenance yard.
ca. 1971	Moved	The Maintenance Shed is moved to the Badger Pass maintenance yard.

Year(s)	Event	Description
1972 A.D.	Built	The Red Fox Run Lift Operator House is built.
1973 A.D.	Built	The Badger and Red Fox Double-Chair Lifts are built.
1974 A.D.	Built	The Turtle Rope Tow is built.
ca. 1980 A.D.	Built	The Maintenance Garage is constructed.
1981 A.D.	Built	The Bruin Double-Chair Lift is built.
1985 A.D.	Built	The Badger Run Lift Operator House is built.
ca. 1986 A.D.	Built	The Cross-Country Equipment Rental Building is added to the site.
1986 A.D.	Moved	The Turtle Rope Tow is moved to its current location.
1986 A.D.	Built	The Eagle Double-Chair Lift is built.
ca. 1987 A.D.	Built	The Badger Pass parking area is expanded (expansion 3).
1996 A.D.	Stabilized	The Badger Pass Ski Lodge undergoes emergency structural repairs.
2005 A.D.	Stabilized	Emergency deck repairs made to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.
2005 – 2006 A.D.	Demolition	The temporary ski rental building is demolished.
2005 A.D.	Built	A new Temporary Downhill Equipment Rental Trailer is constructed to the north of the Ski Lodge.
2007 A.D.	Stabilized	Emergency deck repairs made to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.
2008 A.D.	Rehabilitated	Eagle Double-Chair Lift is converted to a triple-chair lift.
2009 A.D.	Rehabilitated	The Badger Double-Chair Lift is scheduled for renovation in the summer.

Statement of Significance

The Badger Pass Ski Area is a historic site that derives significance at the local level under National Register Criterion A (Event) in the areas of Entertainment/Recreation and the context of Tourism, Recreation and Preservation Ethic, as one of California's earliest developed downhill ski areas. The site was the setting for professional and amateur downhill competitions and the Badger Pass Ski School was a leader in ski instruction during the period of significance. The Badger Pass Ski Area is inextricably linked to the history of cross country and downhill skiing in the United States and is associated with the development of recreation and winter sports in Yosemite National Park. Contributing buildings and structures of the site include the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and the NPS Ranger Residence. Contributing circulation features of the site include prominent vehicular, pedestrian, and recreational circulation paths through the site. The spatial organization and land use patterns, including the location and character of ski runs, lifts and trails reveal the site's design and historic associations. Although some landscape materials have changed over time in response to maintenance and growth of the site, the overall spatial organization at Badger Pass — which is defined by a single access road, a series of parking loops, a central lodge building, and the bowl-shaped ski area — remains unchanged since its period of significance. Native vegetation and topography define the boundary and organization of the ski area as it was originally developed, and together with views and natural systems, contribute to the setting of the historic site. Today, Badger Pass is one of only two existing ski areas located within a national park in the United States. The period of significance for the Badger Pass Ski Area is 1934 to 1953. The Badger Pass Ski Area site retains sufficient historic integrity to convey its significance from the period 1934 to 1953.

National Register Criterion A (Event)

The Badger Pass Ski Area is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places for possessing significance at the local level under National Register Criterion A (Event) in the area of Tourism, Recreation and Preservation Ethic as a site that reflects events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. In this case, the pattern of events is the rise of downhill skiing in California. The Badger Pass Ski Area was one of the first developed downhill ski areas in California and signifies the increasing popularity of downhill skiing in the United States at the time of its establishment in 1934.

The site is also significant for its connection to the Yosemite Ski School, which actively promoted and improved downhill skiing in the United States. Yosemite's Ski School was established in 1928, and moved from the Valley to Badger Pass upon completion of the ski lodge in 1935. The ski school was founded by Ernst des Bailleys, and instructors included international skiing figures such as Jules Fritsch, Ralph de Pfyffer, Gordon Hooley, and W. E. "Wolf" Greeven.⁵ The ski school was a well known and respected institution that brought European ski

5 "Badger Pass Celebrates...Fifty Golden Years!" *Yosemite Sentinel* Book XII, Vol. 1 (January 1986): 1.

racers to serve as instructors at Badger Pass, including Hannes Schroll and Luggi Foeger, who introduced modern downhill ski technique to many park visitors.

The Badger Pass Ski Area served as a center of professional and amateur downhill ski competitions in California and the United States from the 1930s through the 1950s. Over time, a number of regional, statewide, and national ski competitions were held at Badger Pass. In 1942, Badger Pass hosted the first National Ski Championships to be held in California, and the only national ski competition to be held during World War II.⁶ By 1947, the Yosemite Park & Curry Company (the park concessionaire) and the NPS had different goals for the ski area. The concessionaire wanted to maintain Badger Pass's prominence in ski culture by introducing chairlifts and continuing elite ski competitions. The NPS focused on retaining the natural beauty of the site and making recreation available to all visitors regardless of skill level. Over time, the focus of the ski area began to shift from competitions to the creation of a more family-friendly ski destination. This shift in focus began in 1954, when significant additions and alterations to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge were completed to provide additional amenities, including ski rental facilities for beginner skiers and families. In 1958, the transition from competitive ski destination to a family-focused operation that catered to all skill levels became most apparent when Nic Fiore, a Canadian ski instructor that had served under Foeger, became director of the Ski School. Instead of directly competing with larger ski resorts by appealing to more accomplished skiers, Fiore set Badger Pass apart from other ski areas by promoting a family-friendly atmosphere and emphasizing beginning ski instruction that made skiing accessible to the general public. By 1963, nearly all ski competitions except junior races were dropped from the schedule at Badger Pass in deference to the NPS's desire to minimize spectator sports in national parks. By this time, Badger Pass had fully become a family ski center focused on creating a comfortable atmosphere for beginning skiers, and ski competitions were no longer a major component of the ski program at Badger Pass.

Historical Overview

Year-round access to and use of Yosemite National Park was made possible with the completion of the All-Weather Highway (State Route 140) in 1926. The Yosemite Winter Club was established in 1928, and through the support of the NPS and the Yosemite Park & Curry Company (an early concessionaire), a variety of winter sports were explored and encouraged within the park. Upon the completion of the Wawona Tunnel and the Chinquapin to Bridalveil Creek section of the New Glacier Point Road in 1933, it was possible for visitors to more easily access the ski fields at Badger Pass. Prior to this time, visitors explored downhill skiing at Chinquapin and other locations within the park. Due to the naturally sloping, north-facing topography and bowl-shaped character of the site, Badger Pass was an attractive location for a downhill ski area within the park. An experimental electric ski tow, called the up-ski, was installed at Badger Pass in 1934 to provide visitor access to the Old Badger Pass Ski Run. By the

6 Gene Rose, *Magic Yosemite Winters: A Century of Winter Sports* (Truckee, CA: Coldstream Press, 1999): 62.

1933-1934 ski season, 15,000 visitors skied at Badger Pass, and the need for permanent service facilities to accommodate these visitors was apparent.⁷ Plans were carried out in 1935 for the construction of the Badger Pass Access Road and parking area to provide vehicular access to the site, and the Badger Pass Ski Lodge to provide shelter, dining, and restrooms for visitors.

After the completion of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge, parking area, and access road in 1935, the Badger Pass Ski Area saw a dramatic increase in visitor use, necessitating a series of alterations and additions to the facility beginning as early as 1936. During the period of significance from 1934 to 1953, the Badger Pass Ski Area became an important site of regional, statewide, and national downhill skiing competitions and operation of the Badger Pass Ski School. The ski school was a well known and respected institution that brought European ski instructors who were at the forefront of competitive downhill skiing to Badger Pass, including Hannes Schroll and Luggi Foeger.

Today, the Badger Pass Ski Area continues to be actively used as a downhill and cross-country ski area. The site retains many of the characteristics and features from the period of significance and continues to reflect its character and significance in the area of Tourism, Recreation and Preservation Ethic as one of California's first developed downhill ski areas.

Historic Context: Yosemite National Park

The Badger Pass Ski Area developed during a period when winter sports were actively encouraged as recreational uses in national parks. Badger Pass falls under the historic context "Resources Associated with Tourism, Recreation and the Preservation Ethic in Yosemite (1864-1973)," as identified in the draft National Register of Historic Places Property Documentation Form, "Historic Resources of Yosemite National Park," completed by Andrew Kirk and Charles Palmer in 2004 with the University of Las Vegas' Public History Program.

The development of the Badger Pass Ski Area is clearly related to the overall trend in the promotion of winter sports in the national parks, described by Kirk and Palmer as follows:

"Stephen Mather and his successors encouraged Americans to think of the parks as their great national playground, where they could rejuvenate mind and body through outdoor recreation. Official policy was to encourage any sporting activity that did not conflict with the basic mandate of the national parks. In practice, anything other than hunting and organized team sports could be regularly practiced by visitors at Yosemite. Stephen Mather and Horace Albright were especially interested in developing winter sports at Yosemite, in hopes that the park would develop into a year-round resort. Facilities to support camping and hiking were intended to bring

7 Yosemite National Park Archives, Winter Club Scrapbook, 1933-34 Season.

visitors into closer contact with nature, and in the process fostering public support for the park and park service.”⁸

According to Kirk and Palmer, “properties related to Tourism, Recreation, and the Preservation Ethic are eligible under Criterion A if they reflect aspects of Yosemite history that contributed to the growth of outdoor recreation, environmentalism, tourism or trends in the post-war leisure economy.”⁹ The significance of the Badger Pass Ski Area is closely associated with this historic context theme, as the site of the most widely promoted winter sports program in Yosemite National Park during the period of significance.

Historic Context: NPS Ski Areas in the Western United States

In addition to the Badger Pass Ski Area, other national parks in the West developed downhill and cross-country ski areas. In California, the Lassen Ski Bowl operated from 1939 until 1992 at Mount Lassen National Park, and consisted of cross-country and Telemark ski facilities.

In Washington, Mount Rainier National Park hosted downhill skiing from 1933 to 1960 and was the site of the 1935 National Downhill Skiing Championships. Mount Rainier’s Paradise Ski Lodge was constructed between 1939 and 1941, and offered guest accommodations. The Lodge burned on June 3, 1965. Hurricane Ridge at Olympic National Park was constructed between 1951 and 1952, and functioned as the park’s visitor center. Hurricane Ridge continues operation in Olympic National Park as a Visitor Center and ski shop.

In Colorado, Rocky Mountain National Park had a ski area at Hidden Valley, which was the site of the 1934 National Downhill Championships and operated until 1992. Although Yosemite was not the only national park in the Western United States to have downhill skiing or a ski lodge, Badger Pass was one of the first developed downhill ski areas in California and the location of the first ski lodge to be located in a national park on the west coast.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for the Badger Pass Ski Area begins in 1934; the year downhill skiing was officially established at Badger Pass with the construction of the up-ski and clearing of ski runs. This period includes the construction of the Badger Pass Access Road and Badger Pass Ski Lodge in 1935, and continues through the years that Badger Pass was at the forefront of California’s ski culture as a leader in ski instruction and the setting for professional and amateur downhill ski competitions. The period of significance ends in 1953, represented by physical

8 Ibid.

9 Andrew Kirk and Charles Palmer, UNLV Public History, et al. National Register of Historic Places Property Documentation Form, “Historic Resources of Yosemite National Park” (Las Vegas: unpublished report, 2004): Section F, p. 87.

changes to the site at a time when the focus of activity at Badger Pass shifted from the promotion of a new winter sport and a competitive downhill ski facility to a more family-centered recreational facility. After 1953, many alterations occurred to the Badger Pass Ski Area that marked a clear departure from the early program and focus of the site. The clearest example of this change is evidenced by a series of incompatible additions that were added to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge after 1953 in order to facilitate an increasingly family-focused ski program. These additions included more space for dining and restrooms, a second floor observation deck, and a large area for ski rental, which were crucial to accommodating beginner skiers and larger family groups. The additions partially obscured the historic character of the ski lodge building, and were inconsistent with the style, type, and quality of construction of the original building. The post-1953 additions to the ski lodge marked the first major physical intervention at Badger Pass—depicting the beginning of a period of transition of the Badger Pass Ski Area historic site. This transition continued over an extended period in which programmatic changes were made, including changes to the program of the Badger Pass Ski School evidenced by the 1958 hiring of Nic Fiore as Director of the ski school for the purpose of encouraging the education of beginner skiers at Badger Pass. The physical and programmatic changes were completed in attempts to maintain the ski area's relevance as a recreational facility that would attract visitors and be competitive in the marketplace of new ski areas that were developing in the later part of the twentieth century.

Integrity

Today, many of the physical features and characteristics of the Badger Pass Ski Area, including natural systems and features, spatial organization, land use, circulation, topography, vegetation, buildings and structures, and views and vistas, retain the same character exhibited during the period of significance, and contribute to the significance of the site. The site continues its recreational use as a downhill and cross-country ski area within Yosemite National Park, and the associated landscape features of the site have undergone few physical changes since the period of significance. Although the Badger Pass Ski Lodge has somewhat diminished integrity due to incompatible post-1953 additions that break with the architectural character of the original lodge building, the building does retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance as a contributing feature of the historic site. The Badger Pass Ski Lodge is just one of several contributing features of the site. As an individual resource, the Badger Pass Ski Lodge does not appear to possess sufficient historic integrity to qualify it for individual listing on the National Register. However, as a contributing feature of a historic site, the building does retain sufficient historic integrity to convey its significance as associated with the historic site. The site as a whole possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and therefore retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance from the period 1934 to 1953.

Physical History

Unless otherwise footnoted, the information in this section has been largely informed by and excerpted from the National Register of Historic Places Property Documentation Form, “Historic Resources of Yosemite National Park,” completed by Andrew Kirk and Charles Palmer in 2004 with the University of Las Vegas’ Public History Program. This DOE relies on this document to provide the background history and context applicable for the Badger Pass Ski Area.

The history of the development of the Badger Pass Ski Area can be divided into four main periods of development. These periods include: Early History of Yosemite, Tourism and Early Winter Recreation at Yosemite, Development of the Badger Pass Ski Area, and Additions and Alterations.

I. Early History of Yosemite

Prehistory

According to American Indian oral tradition, land use within the boundaries of Yosemite National Park has been ongoing for tens of thousands of years.¹⁰ Archeological investigations document American Indian occupation for at least 8,000 years in some areas of the park. There are no known archeological sites in the project area. Contemporary groups that claim ancestral cultural association with lands now managed by Yosemite National Park include Southern and Central Miwok, Western Mono, Owens Valley and Northern Paiute, and Chukchansi Yokuts.

It is said by living descendants of these groups that their families have oral histories telling of trails traveled through the area to reach destinations such as Little Yosemite, and while crossing the Sierra Nevada for cultural exchange between families from both the western and eastern slopes. Monroe Meadow in the project area would have supplied various resources for use during their traverse across the Sierra, and is considered by American Indians to have cultural significance.¹¹

European Exploration

The first Europeans believed to have seen the Yosemite Valley were members of the Joseph Walker party. In 1833, the Walker Party moved up the steep eastern escarpment and westward across the Sierra Nevada through the future Yosemite National Park. After the discovery of gold in the Sierra Nevada foothills in 1848, the arrival of thousands of miners resulted in conflict with native people fighting to protect their homelands. The Mariposa Battalion, organized as a

10 Gaylen Lee, “Henness Ridge Report”, submitted to USDI, Yosemite National Park by American Indian Council of Mariposa County, Inc. January 2009.

11 Personal Communication, Jeannette Simons, Yosemite National Park American Indian Liaison.

punitive expedition by the State of California to bring an end to the “Mariposa Indian War” entered Yosemite Valley on March 27, 1851. This visit, the first recorded European entry into the valley, changed the valley forever. Exploration was quickly followed by the first trickle of visitors, presaging the future flood of tourists, commercial development, recreational activities, natural resource exploitation, and protection and conservation measures.

In the 1850s, writers, artists, and photographers spread the fame of “the Incomparable Valley” throughout the world. A steadily increasing stream of visitors came on foot and horseback, and later by stage. Realizing that money could be made from tourism, rival entrepreneurs quickly flocked to the valley. Trails, roads, hotels and other structures were constructed, livestock grazed in meadows, and orchards were planted.

Making a National Park

President Abraham Lincoln signed the Yosemite Land Grant Act on June 30, 1864, setting aside the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias under the stewardship of the State of California to protect them and allow for their enjoyment. Even though the first official national park, Yellowstone, was designated years later in 1872, the Yosemite Land Grant Act was the beginning of the American concept of the “national park idea.” Naturalist John Muir and others feared that the State of California, which allowed haphazard development, grazing, and logging in the park, was not properly preserving Yosemite, and a campaign began to establish Yosemite as a national park. Yosemite National Park was established in 1890, with the State of California overseeing Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove and the US Army administering the new national park. The State of California returned their land holdings to the federal government in 1906. Civilian park rangers took over administrative duties from the military in 1914. On August 25, 1916, Congress authorized the creation of the NPS to administer all national parks in the United States, “to promote and regulate the use of the...national parks...which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”¹²

12 “Act to Establish a National Park Service, and for Other Purposes (Organic Act)” August 25, 1916; Yosemite National Park Factsheets: “History” dated April 8, 2003, at <http://www.nps.gov/yose/nature/history.htm>

II. Tourism and Winter Recreation at Yosemite

*Early Recreation in Yosemite*¹³

In 1855, James Hutchings, led by two Indian guides, escorted the first tourist party through the Yosemite Valley. Hutchings, the editor of *California Magazine*, was a British immigrant who worked his way across the United States during the Gold Rush and was intrigued by the reports of the Mariposa Battalion in Yosemite Valley that appeared in San Francisco newspapers. His published description of his 1855 expedition, which included lithographs of drawings made on the trip by artist Thomas Ayres, soon brought increased local as well as national attention to the area. By the end of that year, brothers Milton, Houston, and Andrew Mann had begun construction of a toll trail into Yosemite Valley; and the first hotel was built in the area in 1856. In 1864, Hutchings moved his family to Yosemite, assumed control of Gustavus Hite's Upper Hotel, which he renamed Hutching House, and became one of the most ardent boosters of Yosemite.

The struggle to balance the conservation of natural resources and the development of cultural resources has been present since the park's beginning. Despite the pleas of individuals such as John Muir and Frederick Law Olmsted, in its early days the park was first and foremost a resort destination. The valley floor was heavily developed with hotels, cabins, and camps for tourist lodging, and pastures, cattle pens, farms, orchards, irrigation, timber operations, and even a chapel to support their basic needs. Richard Sellars describes the valley as "a kind of viewing platform from which to enjoy the scenery."¹⁴ For many early visitors, an Emerson-like regeneration through exposure to natural beauty was recreation enough, while others looked for more vigorous ways to encounter Yosemite's beauty. Toll privileges granted by state commissioners enabled concessionaires to build trails to the valley rim, such as the Four-Mile Trail (1871-1872) and the Yosemite Falls Trail (1873-1877), and to improve the Vernal Fall and Mist Trails. In the spirit of Victorian adventure, George Anderson reached the top of the seemingly un-climbable Half Dome on October 12, 1875, and within the week was leading tourists up the precarious route.

The rise of auto-tourism in the twentieth century brought new types of visitors to Yosemite, many of whom were interested in more familiar types of recreation.¹⁵ Secretary of the Interior

13 Information in this section has been excerpted from Andrew Kirk and Charles Palmer, UNLV Public History, et al. National Register of Historic Places Property Documentation Form: "Historic Resources of Yosemite National Park." Las Vegas: unpublished report. 2004.

14 Ibid., 18; See also Earl S. Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America* (New York: Knopf, 1957), 51-52.

15 Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 149-153.

Hubert Work's 1925 Statement of National Park Policy endorsed this development, declaring "All outdoor sports within the safeguards thrown around the national parks by law, should be heartily endorsed and aided wherever possible. Mountain climbing, horseback riding, walking, motoring, swimming, boating, and fishing will ever be the favorite sports."¹⁶ Camp Curry, a tent cabin camp established in 1899 by David and Jennie Curry, provided the sorts of "urban" activities associated with the typical vacation areas, including dances, movies, swimming in the summer, and ice skating and tobogganing in the winter. NPS Director Stephen Mather was especially interested in developing organized winter sports at Yosemite, in hopes that the park would develop into a year-round resort.¹⁷

Early Winter Sports

Early winter sports in Yosemite located in the valley included sledding, cross country skiing, and ice skating. In 1917, local enthusiasts cleared an eight hundred-foot run known as "Ash Can Alley" to the west of Camp Curry. "Ash Can Alley", named for those without sleds, who careened downhill on ash can lids, was a popular sledding site for years. A portion of the Camp Curry parking lot was flooded in winter to create a 60,000 square foot ice skating rink. Before 1928, skiing in Yosemite was done mostly on the Valley Floor and was primarily cross-country, not downhill.¹⁸

All-Weather Highway and Ahwahnee Hotel

Two important developments in Yosemite National Park during 1926-1927 led to the increasing importance of winter use for the park. In August 1926, the "All-Weather Highway" (State Route 140) was completed and gave year-round access for visitors and supplies to the park. The All-Weather Highway made winter visitation possible in the park, and changed how many visitors experienced Yosemite. In addition, the opening of the Ahwahnee Hotel in July 1927 led, albeit indirectly, to increased winter use of the park, which until this time was quiet with relatively few visitors. Even after the construction of the highway and the Ahwahnee, visitors continued to think of Yosemite as a fair-weather destination, and few made the trip in winter. The construction of the new luxurious Ahwahnee Hotel meant that in order for the Yosemite Park & Curry Company to be profitable, either the concessions would need to be closed entirely for

16 Hubert Work, "Statement of National Park Policy" in *America's National Park System*, ed. Lary M. Dilsaver, available at http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/anps/anps_2c.htm (accessed June 12, 2008).

17 Richard West Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 63.

18 "Badger Pass Celebrates...Fifty Golden Years!" 1.

winter, sparing the expense of staff, or somehow additional visitors needed to be found to fill the hotels and dining rooms.

Encouraging Winter Visitation

To make the concessions profitable year round, the president of Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Dr. Donald Tresidder and his wife Mary Curry Tresidder, daughter of the Curry family, early Yosemite concessionaires, looked for ways to encourage winter visitation to the Park. The Tresidders were outdoor enthusiasts who were both excellent skiers and skaters. After attending the Winter Games in 1928 in St. Moritz, Switzerland, they believed that by encouraging winter sports, especially the new sport of ski-touring, they could increase visitation in winter. Mary Curry Tresidder stated, “Winter sports seemed to give some hope of spreading a thin layer of guests over the lean days...we saw Yosemite with its back-drop of beauty as an outstanding winter place... and confidently expected that within a few years the High Sierra Camps would be a series of winter huts like those in the Alps with skiers touring from one to another.”¹⁹ The Tresidders believed that Yosemite had the qualities necessary to become the center of winter sports in America, and set out to encourage the development of winter sports to increase winter visitation.²⁰

In 1928, the Yosemite Park & Curry Company formed the Winter Club, the first California winter sports organization. The Winter Club was established to foster the development of winter sports, promote amateur competition, and continue to improve Yosemite’s winter facilities.

NPS’s Encouragement of Winter Sports

The Yosemite Park & Curry Company was operating in one of the nation’s most significant national parks and had to receive NPS approval of plans for winter sports in Yosemite. NPS’s millionaire director, Stephen Mather, envisioned attracting huge numbers to the nation’s parks by building comfortable lodging, more roads, trails and campgrounds, and expanding visitor services and conveniences. Increased tourism and public support would result in Congressional appropriations upon which the agency depended.²¹ It was believed that visitors would become vocal supporters of national parks, and that the impacts of recreational facilities in the park would be offset by the political will of park users, who would in turn support the creation and maintenance of parks. Stanford University Alumni President Herbert Hoover and Secretary of the Interior, Ray Lyman Wilbur, soon to be president of the university, believed strongly in

19 Sharon Giacomazzi, “Switzerland of the West: Historic Winter Activities in Yosemite,” *Sierra Heritage* (November/December 1997): 36.

20 Gene Rose, “Badger Pass – An American Ski Way,” *Yosemite Association* (Winter 1997): 13.

21 Giacomazzi, 34.

winter recreation at Yosemite.²² Another proponent for winter recreation in Yosemite was Horace Albright, director of the NPS between 1929 and 1933.

Olympic Bid

Horace Albright was one of the founders of the NPS, and was instrumental in encouraging winter use of national parks. As the director of the NPS, Albright supported Yosemite's bid for the 1932 Winter Olympics. In 1929, Yosemite and six other sites (Lake Placid, New York; Lake Tahoe, California; Bear Mountain, New York; Duluth, Minnesota; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Denver, Colorado) made bids to host the 3rd annual Winter Olympics—Lake Placid, New York was selected.²³ Albright believed national parks should be open year-round and winter sports, such as skiing, should be promoted to the public. Albright's support for winter use of national parks was the foundation for development of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and the Lassen Ski Bowl in California's national parks.²⁴

Establishing a Winter Sports Playground

Some winter sports improvements were already in place in Yosemite including the “Ash Can Alley” slide, a new ice rink at the Camp Curry parking lot, and a toboggan slide built in 1927 west of Camp Curry. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, the company kept horses in the valley for sleighing and ski-jöring (skiing while attached by a lead to horses) in Stoneman Meadow, which also provided a field for dog teams.

In 1928, Ernst Des Baillets, a native of Switzerland who had been very successful in promoting winter sports at Lake Placid, New York, was employed as the Director of Winter Sports at Yosemite.²⁵ Des Baillets established a ski school with Swiss instructors Jules Fritsch and Ralph de Pfyffer, Canadian Gordon Hooley, and W. E. “Wolf” Greeven.²⁶ The ski school was located on the moraine across the road from the Yosemite Stables. It offered a downhill run of a few

22 Rose, *Magic Yosemite Winters*, 34.

23 George M. Lattimer, “Official Report: III Olympic Winter Games, Lake Placid 1932” (III Olympic Winter Games Committee: Lake Placid, NY, 1932), 43; and Rose, “Badger Pass – An American Ski Way,” 13.

24 “Horace Albright,” Yosemite Research Library, Horace Albright, Biographical Files.

25 “Badger Pass Celebrates...Fifty Golden Years!” 1.

26 Ibid.

hundred feet and a jump of about sixty feet. Ski instruction, ski tours and jumping demonstrations were conducted by the expert instructors.²⁷

Ski Hut System

While winter sports had been a part of Yosemite National Park since its establishment, the center of winter sports, like much of the recreational development in the park, had been in the valley. The Tresidders worked to encourage the development of a European style ski-hut system that would allow cross-country skiers to travel from hut to hut on backcountry tours. The Tresidders constructed the Snow Creek Ski Cabin in 1930 on Mount Watkins according to the design of San Francisco architect Eldridge T. Spencer.

Snow Creek Ski Cabin

The Snow Creek Ski Cabin was located on the west slope of Mt. Watkins at about 7,650 feet elevation. According to Mary Curry Tresidder, Spencer drew the plans of the Snow Creek Cabin with Dr. Tresidder, an avid outdoorsman and skier. Spencer had referred to a book of pictures and architectural plans of Swiss mountain huts to assist him in his design. Modeled on Swiss ski huts, the diminutive Snow Creek Cabin featured a rectangular plan, wood frame construction, an asymmetrical gable roof with one side sweeping only a few feet from the ground, wood shingle siding, and simple windows with wood shutters. The interior included a kitchen with a wood burning stove, a narrow passage with two bunk beds and a larger room with a table and six additional bunk beds. A steep, narrow stairway led to the loft, which was divided into two rooms with cots for six or eight people.²⁸

In addition to the construction of the Snow Creek Ski Cabin, a ranger cabin at Tenaya Lake and another NPS building at Tuolumne Meadows were converted into ski chalets. The Tresidders essentially created the first hut system for ski touring in the Sierra and devised cross-country ski tours of two to six days, the first such tours organized in the United States.

However, in spite of the Tresidder's intentions, ski touring never became as popular as expected, and downhill skiing became the primary winter sport for most Americans. Ski touring proved difficult and physically challenging work for most, while in comparison, downhill skiing was less grueling since the chair lift took most of the effort out of getting to the top of the slope. Tresidder believed that downhill skiing could introduce more people to what he believed was a superior sport--ski-touring. Tresidder stated, "When a visitor can negotiate these runs safely he is

27 Ibid.

28 Mary Curry Tresidder, "Story of the Snow Creek Lodge," *Yosemite Nature Notes* 32, no. 2 (February 1953): 14.

ready for ski touring, which, as I understand it, is the ultimate objective we have in mind in our program in the Park.”²⁰

Early Downhill Skiing in Yosemite

By the 1930s, skiing in Yosemite had moved away from the valley as the Winter Club and adventurous skiers searched for new and more challenging north-facing downhill slopes at higher altitudes, which promised better snow conditions. During the winter of 1932-1933, a new downhill area at Chinquapin, an area 12 miles south of the valley at 6,000 feet in elevation, was used. After completion of the Wawona Tunnel in June 1933, the Wawona Road was kept open through the winter. Greatly improved winter access meant that the slopes near Chinquapin, which held a new Chinquapin service station that doubled as a day lodge for skiers, were the principal place to ski during the winter of 1933-1934.²⁹

III. Development of the Badger Pass Ski Area

In the early 1930s, the Winter Club searched for ski slopes. Six miles up Glacier Point Road, west of Badger Pass and above Monroe Meadow, they discovered rolling, north-facing terrain lined with stands of conifers, which led to a protected meadow below. Monroe Meadow was named after George Monroe, a Pony Express rider on the treacherous route between Merced and Mariposa. Monroe had the honor of driving President U.S. Grant along the Wawona Trail into Yosemite Valley in 1879.³⁰ Badger Pass was purportedly named by a stage coach driver who saw a badger while resting the horses before going down the other side.³¹ Located at approximately 7,200 feet in elevation, Badger Pass shortly became the new downhill ski area in Yosemite and an experimental electric lift was installed in an area east of the current Lodge in Monroe Meadow in 1934. Carrying only a few skiers at a time, the cable-drawn toboggan was a big success. Despite the ski area’s relatively primitive facilities (only snacks were offered and the area’s outhouses were crude) downhill skiing at Badger Pass was flourishing, and it became obvious that improved amenities, including a ski lodge were necessary.³²

According to the records of the Winter Club, the 1933-1934 season:

29 Curry Tresidder, “Story of the Snow Creek Lodge,” 14.

30 “George Monroe” Available online <http://www.xphomestation.com/gmonroe.html> (accessed 11/2008).

31 Pat Oliver, “How did Badger Pass get its name? And other interesting tidbits,” *Yosemite Collector and Historical Quarterly* (n.d.): 7.

32 Rose, *Magic Yosemite Winters*, 34.

...saw a large increase in the interest of skiing in Yosemite. It was estimated that 15,000 people visited the Badger Pass area during the season... The “up-ski,” or lift, proved quite a help to those who prefer running downhill only, and the experiment proved very successful. Plans are already being considered for a more permanent construction next season, as this year it was mainly an experiment... The need of a ski lodge with the facilities of handling large crowds was very evident. During this season several cabins used in the summer by the road crews were utilized and at busy periods were jammed to capacity... Plans are already being considered for a ski lodge to be located at the base of the meadow, which will have a lounge, kitchen, ski room and rest rooms. The clearing done at the beginning of the season was a large improvement, but with the increase of skiing, especially at peak times, showed the need of more clearing of hills to accommodate the skiers. Parking facilities at peak times showed that serious thought must be given to this matter also... With the elaborate plans now being discussed for next season, the outlook is for much greater interest than ever before in the ski sport in California and especially in Yosemite.³³

Design of the Badger Pass Ski Area

Tresidder, eager to capitalize on the popularity of downhill skiing, realized that Badger Pass had great potential as a ski area, and believed that the site, with its easy access from the valley, its sufficient quantity of good quality snow, and good skiing terrain, could be one of the great skiing centers of California. In February 1935, Tresidder mentioned the growing numbers of ski enthusiasts at Monroe Meadow to Park Superintendent Colonel Thomson, who served on the Executive Committee of the Winter Club from 1929 to 1932. Tresidder suggested that in order to serve the skiers, the Yosemite Park & Curry Company should construct a simple warming hut structure, and that the government should install flush toilets, a loop road and parking.³⁴ A more extensive proposal was submitted to Thomson in April 1935, including a ski house with a lounge, dining space, kitchen, ski rental, ski maintenance, locker rooms, space for spectators, running water, and toilets. Tresidder explained, “It is our thought that this structure should be of simple, rustic character, built at the lowest expense possible, but designed to render a real service.”³⁵ In addition to a ski house, Tresidder’s proposal called for construction of a ski lift,

33 Yosemite National Park Archives, Winter Club Scrapbook, 1933-34 Season.

34 Donald Tresidder to Colonel Thomson, Superintendent, Yosemite National Park, February 20, 1935, Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development Records Badger Pass 1935-1939, Folder 163.

35 Donald Tresidder to Colonel Thomson, Superintendent, Yosemite National Park, April 17, 1935, Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development Records Badger Pass 1935-1939, Folder 163.

side road and parking lot, and construction of ski trails by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).³⁶

The Yosemite Park & Curry Company's lofty plans, which included constructing the lodge in time for the 1935-1936 ski season and the NPS paying for all infrastructure including the access road, parking lot, and water and sewer system improvements were initially met with concern from the NPS. The NPS was uncomfortable making such a large investment, over \$32,000 for infrastructure, especially since winter sports were not previously a priority for the NPS. In a letter to Don Tresidder, the Superintendent stated, "To date we have been edging our way along very carefully in winter sports developments, largely meeting demands as they have become apparent."³⁷ The NPS had little intention of becoming involved in the development of permanent visitor facilities at Monroe Meadow, especially at its own expense, and with relatively little advance warning.

With the assistance of Park Superintendent Thomson, who served on the Executive Committee of the Winter Club and was personally interested in winter sports, Tresidder sought approval for construction of a ski lodge with lounge, restaurant, restrooms, ski rental, and ski school. Thomson lobbied Harold Ickes, the Secretary of the Interior and a staunch preservationist, who believed there should be as little intervention in national parks as possible. Tresidder pushed ahead with his ambitious plan to have the lodge ready for the 1935-1936 ski season and began construction of the foundation for a lodge at Monroe Meadow in late September 1935, prior to the release of NPS funding. Thomson's lobbying paid off, and in October 1935 funding for the development of the Badger Pass Ski Area was approved. Part of this development included construction of a two-story Tyrolean ski lodge designed by Eldridge T. Spencer. Spencer designed the Swiss Chalet style building with a dramatic roofline and simple rustic finishes. The building was situated at the base of the Monroe Meadow, affording exceptional views of the slopes and skiers.

According to the drawings, the proposed "Ski House at Monroe Meadows" would primarily function as a ski house and lounge to serve skiers and spectators, who could take advantage of the sweeping views of the slopes from the lounge and deck. The lounge would be the main destination for visitors; it was to be lined with partially-glazed wood doors on the south façade, to take advantage of the view to the ski slopes. The lounge opened onto a large wood deck and features stairs to the ski fields. This room, the most prominent space in the lodge, included exposed trusses, unpainted board-and-batten wood walls, concrete/stone floors, lantern-style light fixtures, and an oversize fireplace with a flagstone hearth with decorative cast iron metal panels by artist Robert Boardman Howard. The furniture, designed for the space, included chairs and an oversized sectional sofa, all with rustic wood bases. Wood dining tables and chairs with

36 Ibid.

37 Superintendent to Don Tresidder, August 19, 1935, Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development Records Badger Pass 1935-1939, Folder 163.

turned legs were used to serve visitors, skiing or not, who could bring their own lunch or enjoy short-order food service in the lounge or on the deck in good weather.

In addition to the lounge, the first floor was designed to include a lobby with a heater running the length of the room at the north façade. A ski room (for rental and service) was included at the southwest portion of the first floor. Service rooms, including a kitchen, restrooms, storage, and a garage were located at the northeast portion of the first floor. The basement included a boiler room and battery room at the north, an ash pit below the fireplace, and wood storage. The second floor was accessed by an octagonal shaped wood stair from the first floor. A mezzanine was located at the west and included a view to the lounge and fireplace below. The caretaker's apartment was located in the northeast portion of the floor and included a bedroom, restroom, and closets with access to the first floor service area through a narrow service stair. Balconies were located along the east, south, and north façades.

The north façade was similar in materials and detailing to the south façade. The north façade included a recessed central entry porch, and a projecting bay. The first floor of the north façade featured four-light wood-sash windows, and paired, partially glazed, multi-light wood doors. The second floor featured four-light wood-sash windows.

The east façade featured log slab siding, a wide overhanging eave supported by wood posts, and no fenestration. The west façade featured log slab siding and a shed-roofed porch supported by wood posts.

The Badger Pass Ski Lodge provided winter sports fans a base from which to enjoy the ski terrain on the slopes surrounding Monroe Meadow. Rooms for skis and equipment, a large fireplace and hot drinks and lunches were served by the concessionaire. With a wide gabled roof and log construction, the ski lodge featured partially glazed doors facing the ski runs to the south, providing a visual connection between the building and its surrounding landscape. The building was dedicated on December 15, 1935, and was the earliest downhill ski lodge in California.

In 1935, the greater ski area included a parking loop, downhill ski runs, cross country ski trails, and an area near the base of the Bruin Run for the Badger Pass Ski School to conduct its classes. Jules Fritsch established the Yosemite Ski School in 1928, and Ernst Des Baillels was the first school director. The location of the ski school was moved to Badger Pass upon completion of the lodge in 1935 and renamed the Badger Pass Ski School. The Ski School Bell dates to around the time of the establishment of the Badger Pass Ski School in 1935, and was rung to signal the start of ski school classes each day from its historic location at the base of the Bruin Run.

Park Service Rustic and Swiss Chalet Styles

The majority of the buildings constructed in Yosemite National Park between 1924 and 1940, including the Snow Creek Ski Cabin (1930), were designed in what is known today as the Park Service Rustic style, or more playfully, "Parkitecture." Most new buildings constructed during this time, including both Park Service and concessionaire buildings, were designed in this style

to better harmonize with the natural and cultural setting of Yosemite. The adoption of this particular variant of Park Service Rustic style, heavily influenced by the Swiss Chalet style that characterized the ski lodge buildings in Yosemite, can also be attributed to collaboration between Eldridge T. Spencer and the Tresidders.

The roots of the Park Service Rustic style primarily derive from the Arts and Crafts Movement as well as nineteenth-century German and Swiss resort architecture. Known as the Swiss Chalet style, this rustic mode is typically characterized by overhanging gable roofs, expressed wood timber construction, and scroll-saw cut wood trim. The third major influence on the development of the Park Service Rustic style was the Adirondack style, a log and stone-based style used in the design of wilderness lodges and hunting camps in Upstate New York's Adirondack and Catskill Mountains. The hallmark of this style included the use of exposed peeled log framing, oversized stone foundations and fireplaces, and porches. These rustic styles were featured in extravagant lodges in scenic locations constructed to encourage tourism throughout America's West. One of the best examples of the Park Service Rustic is the Ahwahnee Hotel, built by the National Park Service in Yosemite National Park in 1927.

The Swiss Chalet style was the primary influence at the Snow Creek Ski Cabin and the Badger Pass ski lodges at Yosemite. The Swiss Chalet architectural style is based on timber houses characteristic of Switzerland, the Bavarian Alps, Tyrol, and the French Alps. The Swiss Chalet style is distinguished by its simultaneously rustic and decorative use of the style's primary building material, wood. Chalets are square or rectangular in plan, have cubic massing, and use heavy planks in a framing technique similar to that used for log houses.

The Badger Pass Ski Lodge was designed in a Park Service Rustic style with Swiss Chalet style elements, including: the wood frame structure; front gable roof with wide overhanging eaves and decorative brackets; natural bark half-log siding; balconies with railings featuring decorative cut-outs; and rectangular, multi-light casement windows. The lodge was featured in the Park Service's 1938 *Park & Recreation Structures Volume III*; part of a three-volume series of books that was produced for the Park Service to provide design guidance for construction in National Parks; therefore, the building was understood by the Park Service as a prototype to be emulated. According to historic photographs, the architectural typology of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge was later adapted by Lake Tahoe and the Sierra Ski Resorts, including the Strawberry Ski Lodge on Highway 50, and the Squaw Valley Ski Lodge.³⁸ These resorts were similar in style and included wood frame construction, gable roofs with wide overhanging eaves, and rectangular multi-light windows.

38 Historic Photographs, 1940, Yosemite National Park Archives, Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Folder: Badger Pass 1935-1970.

Site Improvements

In addition to the construction of the ski lodge, the up-ski (an early sled-style ski tow) was extended to the top of the first dome, and runs were cleared by the CCC.³⁹ The NPS connected the ski lodge to the remainder of the park by a short spur road (known as the Badger Pass Access Road) built off of Glacier Point Road, and constructed a 200-car parking loop.⁴⁰ The access road features framed vistas of the lodge and ski area beyond, and the parking loop was located just north of the lodge across the road.

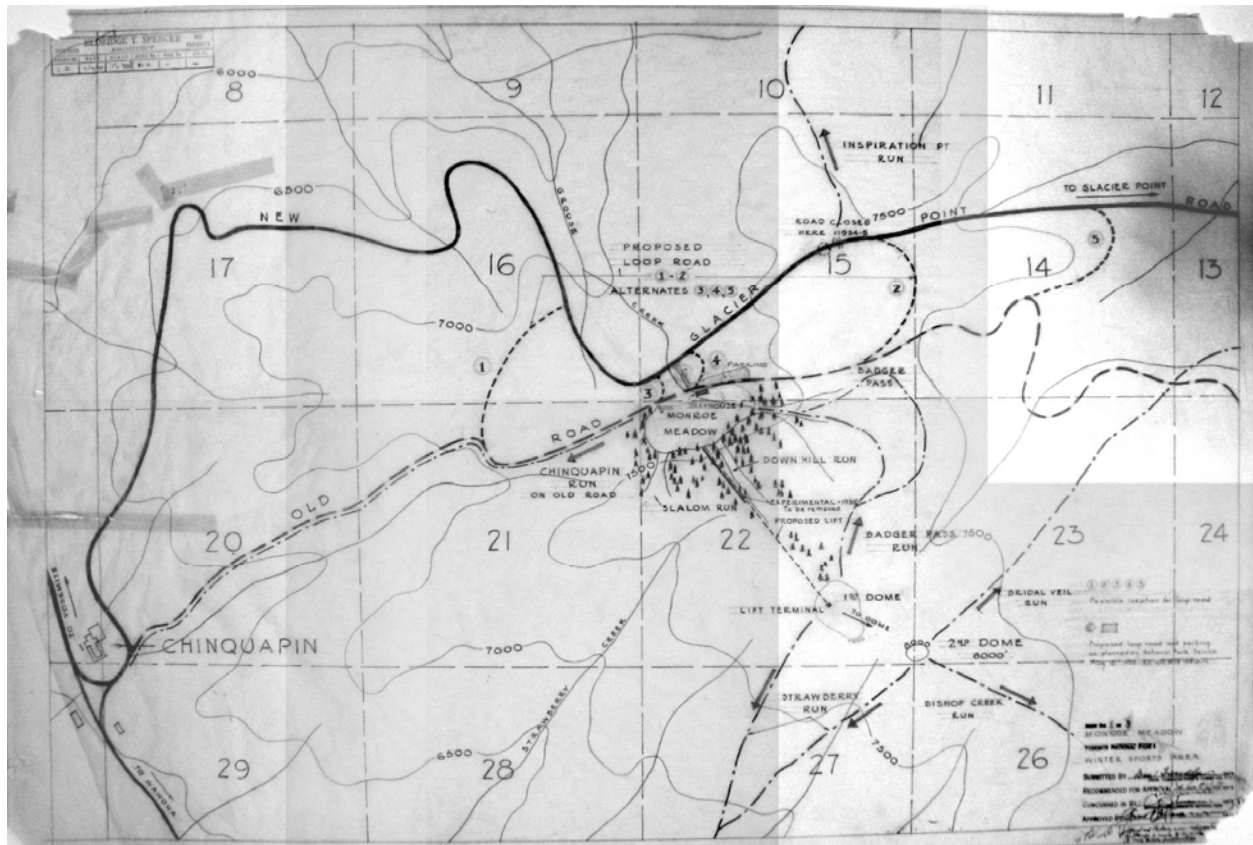
Site improvements in the vicinity of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge continued throughout the remainder of the 1930s. The up-ski was improved in 1935, and in 1936 a pair of sleds were added to the up-ski to carry visitors; one was called “Queen Mary” after Mary Curry Tresidder, and the other was called “Big Bertha.”

39 “Hannes Schroll,” Yosemite Research Library, Hannes Schroll, Biographical Files.

40 Superintendent’s Monthly Reports, October 1935, Yosemite Research Library.



Skiing at Badger Pass in 1934-35, prior to construction of the Ski Lodge.
Source: Magic Yosemite Winters.



1935 site plan for Badger Pass. Source: Yosemite Research Library.



View of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge from the southwest, 1936. Source: Yosemite Research Library.



Up-ski, Queen Mary sled, looking northwest towards Badger Pass Ski Lodge, 1937. Source: Yosemite Research Library.

IV. Alterations and Additions

Early Development

A number of alterations and additions were made to Badger Pass Ski Area over time. According to the Superintendent's Report, the Badger Pass Ski Lodge was renovated as early as 1936. In 1936, an addition, including a ski fitting room and a shed-roofed porch, was added to the west façade of the ski lodge. At the same time, an addition was made to the east façade which included a dishwashing room and storeroom. The deck on the south side of the building was extended to shelter a large locker and waxing room underneath, and the kitchen was enlarged to the east to "facilitate the serving of light meals." The platform at the west side of the deck was extended and new stairs were installed to access the slopes from the new porch. These additions were completed in a sympathetic style, and used the same materials as the original design; including log slab clad walls and partially glazed multi-light wood doors.

By 1938, Tresidder realized that the demand on the ski area was still increasing and that issues of employee lodging, dining, ski rental space, parking and restrooms were unresolved. A number of solutions were proposed by Tresidder, including the establishment of a secondary base for skiers at Glacier Point; construction of a separate dormitory building and remodeling of the second floor of the ski lodge; extension of the upstairs balcony to create more space at the ground floor for store and rental rooms; and construction of a separate building with ski rental facilities, a waxing room, picnic facilities, and restrooms.⁴¹

In September 1938, Tresidder submitted various architectural solutions to resolve the overcrowding of the lodge including: additions to the kitchen, additions to the women's toilets, enclosure of space at either the east or south facade of the building to allow for additional dining area, the addition of a terrace across the entire length of the rear (south) façade to permit an enlargement of the basement locker room, or the construction of an entirely new building on the site of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge. The NPS approved the toilet, kitchen, and dishwashing additions.⁴² No documentary evidence of these architectural plans was located.

Site changes were also made at this time, which included the widening of the Badger Pass Access Road by the CCC in August 1938. A temporary Ranger Station was present on site at Badger Pass in 1939, and plans were being made to construct a permanent structure around this time. According to F. R. Givens, Acting District Ranger, "the temporary structure now present

41 Donald Tresidder to L. C. Merriam, Superintendent, May 20, 1939, Yosemite Research Library, Old Central Files Coll, Box 20, Series 7, 1936-1944, Folder 163, Development Records – Badger Pass, Folder 2 of 2.

42 Donald Tresidder to L. C. Merriam, Superintendent, September 1, 1939, Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development Records Badger Pass 1936-1944, Folder 163.

does not inspire anyone and should be replaced by a more suitable one as soon as possible.”⁴³ No documentary evidence of the temporary Ranger Station was located.

Parking was a concern as early as 1938, and continues to be a problem at Badger Pass today. A historic parking plan shows that the original parking loop was completed in 1936 with a capacity for 200 cars.⁴⁴ On January 1, 1939, 546 cars parked in the Badger Pass area, over-filling the lot and lining the road.⁴⁵

1940s Development

On January 25, 1940, the Badger Pass Ranger Residence, the first permanent NPS building at Badger Pass, was completed by the CCC.⁴⁶ Based on plans dated August 31, 1939, the building was constructed across the Badger Pass Access Road, to the north of the ski lodge.⁴⁷ The building was a simple, one-story, wood frame building with a gable roof and stone-faced concrete foundation. The building featured wood plank and shingle cladding, oversize roof brackets, and a stone chimney. Over time the building was known as the Ranger Station and Ranger Residence. The building remains on site and is called the Ranger Residence.

In 1941, the parking area was enlarged to serve 200 additional cars.⁴⁸ According to a memorandum for the press, “a new 200-car parking area is under construction by the NPS at

43 F. R. Givens, Acting District Ranger, Memorandum for the Superintendent and Chief Ranger, May 10, 1939, Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development Records Badger Pass 1940-1944, Folder 165.

44 “Addition to Badger Pass Parking Area” drawing dated July 26, 1940, revised December 8, 1941. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Obtained from Denver Service Center, TIC files.

45 John B. Wosky, Assistant Superintendent, to Superintendent, June 5, 1939, Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development Records Badger Pass 1936-1944, Folder 163.

46 Superintendent’s Monthly Reports, January 1940, Yosemite Research Library.

47 Memorandum for the Regional Director, Region IV, from H.L. Crowley, Acting Regional Engineer, Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Maps 1937-1944, Folder 124.

48 “Addition to Badger Pass Parking Area” drawing dated July 26, 1940, revised December 8, 1941. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Obtained from Denver Service Center, TIC files. E.M. Hilton, Park Engineer “Addition to Badger Pass Parking Area.” December 8, 1941. Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Projects 1941, Folder 132.

Badger Pass. Combined with the present parking area, the total capacity will be 400 cars.”⁴⁹ A 1941 memo from Park Engineer E.M. Hilton stated that drawings of an addition to the parking area at Badger Pass were complete.

Between 1940 and 1941, the CCC constructed for the NPS a Comfort Station with men’s and women’s restrooms. The station was located adjacent to the west side of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge. By 1941, the NPS contemplated construction of a ski shelter that would adjoin the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and replace the Comfort Station.

Eldridge Spencer completed a study titled, “Analysis of the Badger Pass Building Program” in 1941, which included plans to make an addition to the ski lodge at its east façade with a new dining room and terrace. Spencer’s plans also incorporated the Comfort Station, which would feature a new shelter, terrace, and Ranger Station. The enlarged ski lodge and Comfort Station complex would be connected by a new covered walk.⁵⁰

By 1941, a map of the ski field shows two rope tows in addition to the up-ski.⁵¹ CCC labor made many of the site improvements at Badger Pass possible, including clearing and widening many of the runs and constructing a 30-meter ski jump in 1941.⁵² The ski jump was located in the area between the current Badger and Chipmunk ski runs. A government ski shelter was proposed for the site one hundred feet west of the ski lodge, parallel to the road and set back twenty feet from the pavement.⁵³ By 1942, historic maps indicate that the water tower to the northeast of the Lodge was in place.

49 National Park Service, “Memorandum for the Press,” September 20, 1940, Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Yosemite National Park Publicity, Publicity and Statistics, Folder 88.

50 Eldridge Spencer, “Study of Badger Pass,” November 5, 1941, Yosemite National Park Archives, Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Adams-Badger, Badger Pass 1940-1954.

51 “Yosemite Winter Sports,” Brochure, 1941. Yosemite Research Library, Y P & C Co. – Seasonal Brochures, Winter/Winter Sports, Yosemite Ski School.

52 E. M. Hilton, Park Engineer, Memorandum for the Superintendent: “CCC Work at Badger Pass Winter Sports Area.” October 31, 1941. Yosemite National Park Archives, Development Records Badger Pass 1936-1944, Folder 165.

53 Frank Kittredge, “Memo for Files: Matter of locating future proposed government ski shelter.” November 26, 1941. Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development Records Badger Pass 1936-1944, Folder 165.

World War II

The United States' entrance into World War II led to major changes at Yosemite. The NPS reduced staffing to a skeleton crew, closed many facilities, and reduced appropriations to what was barely necessary to maintain park operations. In the face of declining tourism and the rationing of supplies, the Yosemite Park & Curry Company drastically reduced service at Yosemite. The park was used by soldiers returning from duty, the Ahwahnee Hotel served as a convalescent hospital for the Navy, and articles were published on the restorative benefits of skiing, which highlighted the ski fields of Badger Pass. Badger Pass remained open during the winter of 1942-1943, and welcomed 15,257 visitors; however, due to rationing of gasoline and rubber, the area was closed for the remainder of the war.⁵⁴ The Army Signal Corps occupied the area around Badger Pass during the war – it is unknown if the Army Signal Corps occupied the Badger Pass Ski Area.

Post-War Changes

As World War II drew to a close and visitor numbers rose, it became obvious that the facilities at Badger Pass could not keep up with increasing demand. As early as 1942, the NPS noted the growing popularity of the Badger Pass Ski Area, which 53,424 people visited between January and March 1940, and as many as 3,600 sport enthusiasts visited in one day, overflowing the utility operator's accommodations and demonstrating the need for additional shelter and toilet facilities. According to a 1942 memo, "This is the only location in the park where large numbers of people congregate without some Government provision for shelter and sanitary accommodations. It is a customary sight on weekends and holidays to see people lined up waiting their turn at the operator's restrooms, and the operator's lobby so completely filled that shelter is not obtainable for many visitors. It is essential that some Governmental provision be made for these enthusiasts."⁵⁵

A memorandum to the Chief Ranger from District Ranger Harry During stated that extensive development of the Badger Pass Area was necessary in the near future to accommodate the ever-increasing number of skiers. By 1946, O.A. Tomlinson, NPS Regional Director, recommended that the up-ski be replaced with a Constam T-Bar ski lift (now known as the Old Beaver T-Bar Lift). Tomlinson reasoned that the T-Bar had greater capacity and is far less conspicuous than the over-head chair lift type.⁵⁶ A map of Badger Pass in a 1948 promotional brochure shows one T-Bar ski lift and three rope tows, including the first beginner rope tow.⁵⁷

54 Ralph Anderson, "Yosemite Ski Slopes Serve in Wartime," September 20, 1943. Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Yosemite National Park Publicity Part II 1941-1943, Folder 89.

55 Physical Improvements 1942. Preliminary Estimates, All Non-recurring. Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, no title 1940-1942, Folder 8.

56 O.A. Tomlinson, August 5, 1946. Yosemite National Park Archives, Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Adams-Badger, Folder Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

In 1948, the concessionaire assumed partial responsibility for patrolling the ski slopes and administering first aid at Badger Pass. The First Aid Station was constructed that year by the Yosemite Park & Curry Company. Located to the west of the lodge deck, the building was constructed in September and October 1948.⁵⁸ The building was later relocated and incorporated into the 1954 building addition. The First Aid Station is currently used as an office.

As early as 1947, the concessionaire and the NPS were at odds regarding the future of the Badger Pass Ski Area. The NPS was against the introduction of chairlifts which they believed would compromise the scenic beauty of the site and the NPS did not believe that competitive skiing was an acceptable focus for a ski area located within a national park, since their goal was to make recreation accessible to all visitors, regardless of skill level.

1950s Development

In 1950, the Park Landscape Architect, Harold Fowler, recognized that Badger Pass “has always been considered as a secondary [ski] area but nevertheless it has remained very popular. It serves the mass of people and that is what we are striving to do.”⁵⁹ In contrast, the concessionaire believed that it was imperative for Badger Pass to maintain its prominence as a leader in California ski culture, and sought to introduce more advanced facilities and to continue a full schedule of ski competitions. The Yosemite Park & Curry Company was concerned that, “because of the lack of steep slopes at Badger Pass the good skiers, with their following, have left for other ski areas.”⁶⁰ The lack of adequate facilities to accommodate the number of visitors trying to use the site led to issues of congestion and over-crowding

The 1951-1952 annual report for Badger Pass, a year of record snowfall, states that the ski lodge leaked and settled on its foundation and “now needs considerable repair.” According to Ranger Gallison, “the building was designed for 700 people and now 2,000 try to jam into it.”⁶¹ The ski

57 “Yosemite in Winter,” Brochure, 1948, Yosemite Research Library, Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Seasonal Brochures, Winter/Winter Sports, Yosemite Ski School.

58 Superintendent’s Monthly Report, September and October, 1948. Yosemite Research Library.

59 Harold G. Fowler, Park Landscape Architect to Assistant Regional Director, Planning & Construction, “Badger Pass Area and Runs,” September 11, 1950. Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development 1949-1950, Folder 137.

60 Oscar A. Sedergen, Chief Ranger to Mr. Kittredge, March 7, 1947. Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development Records Badger Pass 1945-1947, Folder 167.

61 M.B. Evans District Ranger to Chief Ranger, April 30, 1952. “Annual Report from Badger Pass for 1951-52,” Yosemite National Park Archives, Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Adams-Badger, Folder Badger Pass 1940-54.

lodge's facilities, including restrooms, warming areas and parking lots were in need of expansion. An inspection report authored by the Winter Use Committee of the NPS on March 12, 1952 recommended that the lodge day-use facilities be enlarged by 50% to 100%, depending upon the future construction of a warming hut with government funds.⁶²

In a memorandum to Mr. Oehlman, President of the Yosemite Park & Curry Company, dated May 9, 1952, Charley Proctor, who served as Director of Winter Sports at Yosemite, claimed:

...the ski house at Badger Pass has proven inadequate in several respects during the past several years... From an operating point of view the following are the most pressing needs:

1. Provide satisfactory and legal living accommodations for between 20 and 25 employees.
2. More space for the rental of skis. The ski fitting is now being done out doors in good weather and in the basement during storms. Neither of these arrangements is very satisfactory.
3. More indoor dining space. The seating facilities for dining are quite satisfactory during clear weather but are completely inadequate on stormy weekends.⁶³

After twenty years of wear and tear on the Badger Pass Ski Area, increased need for ski rental amenities, and the need for the site to grow to accommodate visitors, plans for the first major intervention were submitted to the NPS in June 1954. The project included a new building on the site of the existing NPS Comfort Station just west of the original lodge, and alterations to the original lodge. The Comfort Station was retained in place, and currently functions as a portion of the restroom facilities within the 1954 addition. The new rectangular plan building was designed in a modern style and featured a shed-roof, vertical log cladding, and irregularly placed, applied wood snowflakes as ornament. The first floor included a ski activities room to the south, first aid to the southwest, and restrooms, boiler rooms, and generators to the north. The second floor was used as dormitory space for employees.

Alterations to the original lodge in 1954 included the addition of two new bathrooms at the second floor of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.⁶⁴ Photographs dating to 1955 show the deck of the

62 Winter Use Committee, "Inspection of Winter Use Operations at Yosemite National Park, 1951-1952" March 12, 1952,. 8. Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Development Records Badger Pass, Folder 167.

63 Memorandum from Charley Proctor to Oehlmann, "Skiing Facilities and Developments," May 9, 1952. Yosemite National Park Archives, Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Adams-Badger, Folder Badger Pass Ski Lodge 1940-1956.

original lodge extended to the south. It is presumed that during this 1954 remodel the south deck was extended and the basement locker rooms were enlarged. It is likely that the fireplace was removed at this time as well. Historic architectural drawings show that Spencer designed the alterations. According to monthly Superintendent's Reports, work on the addition commenced in August 1954, and the majority of the addition was completed by the Yosemite Park & Curry Company by the winter 1954 ski season.⁶⁵

A year and a half after the opening of the new 1954 addition building, a design by Eldridge Spencer for a connector breezeway between the two buildings was constructed. 1956 alterations included construction of a service addition to the east end of the south elevation, excavation of the south crawlspace of the 1954 building for a new locker room, and a new basement level connection between the two buildings below the breezeway. Given the size and impact of both the 1954 and 1956 projects, it is likely that they were designed together as phased projects; however, this is speculative.

In 1958, the parking lot at Badger Pass was enlarged to accommodate 265 additional cars. The \$55,000 project, which included the construction of new parking loops to the north of the present parking area, was funded through the NPS Mission 66 program.⁶⁶

1960s to Present Development

In 1960, the Winter Olympic Games were held at Squaw Valley in Placer County, near Lake Tahoe. These Olympic Games, the first to be held in the Western United States and the first to be televised, reinforced the reality that skiing in California was now focused on the Lake Tahoe area. By the 1960s, the concept of a ski area had changed to become more inclusive and accommodating to visitors, and included acres of long, steep ski runs with challenging terrain, multitudes of ski lifts, and massive lodges.

Although the ski facilities at Badger Pass were improved over time, and by 1961 three additional lifts and the rope tow known as the "Flying Clothesline" on the beginner slope were added, Badger Pass was no longer at the top of the ski world.⁶⁷ The Park concessionaire was becoming increasingly concerned that Badger Pass would no longer have a prominent ski culture presence.

64 Superintendent's Monthly Report, October, 1954, 5 Yosemite Research Library.

65 Superintendent's Monthly Report, December, 1954. Yosemite Research Library.

66 Omar Crane, "Badger Pass will get 265 more parking spaces for Skiers' Automobiles" *Fresno Bee*, February 27, 1958. Though there is no documentary evidence, it appears that the discrepancy in the number of parking spaces between 1941 (400) and 1958 (300) may be due to a reconfiguration of the parking area to accommodate larger automobiles.

67 Mary Curry Tresidder, "Yosemite Skiing Historic Highlights, Part III" *The Snowflake* (March 24, 1961): 2.

By 1964, the Yosemite Park & Curry Company was troubled by the NPS's new Winter Sports Policy, which placed constraints on chair lifts due to the belief that chair lifts would mar the scenic values of the park. Without upgrades to chair lifts and other ski amenities, the Yosemite Park & Curry Company feared that Badger Pass would be left behind in the world of skiing. Charley Proctor, Director of Winter Sports, stated in a letter to Yosemite Park & Curry Company President:

I feel very strongly that we should have a chair lift rather than another T-Bar. From the practical point of view it would make little difference. Either machine will take skiers to the top of the hill with more or less equal efficiency. However, for prestige reasons we need a chair lift. Today skiers regard an area without a chair lift as of no account. Sometime ago Badger Pass was omitted from a listing of ski areas. When we questioned this, the reply was that an area without a chair lift was not worthy of listing in their publication.⁶⁸

Largely due to the persistence of the concessionaire, between 1965 and 1990 a number of new chair lifts were added to the ski runs at Badger Pass Ski Lodge. In 1965, the Yosemite Park & Curry Company proposed a double-chair lift to be located on the old up-ski track.⁶⁹ On October 22, 1969, a new chair lift was proposed. Double-chair lifts replaced T-Bars at Red Fox and Badger in 1973, the Turtle Rope Tow was added in 1974 (moved to its present location in 1986); a special beginner's chair, called the Bruin Double-Chair Lift replaced the Bruin T-Bar in 1981; and The Eagle Double-Chair Lift was added in 1986 (converted into a triple-chair lift in 2008).⁷⁰

In 1968, a major building campaign took place which included expansion of the original lodge, reconfiguration of the 1954 building, and the construction of a new ski rental building near the southwest corner of the 1954 building. Other site changes during this period included the relocation of the A-frame NPS Ranger Station to Badger Pass from Foresta in 1969.⁷¹

In 1976, a holding tank room was added at the north side of the 1954 building. This addition extended the roofline of the 1954 building further to the north. A third parking expansion was completed in 1987 to accommodate more vehicles and a helicopter landing pad was also added at this time. In 1989, improvements to the water system at Badger Pass were proposed. It is

68 Memorandum from Charley Proctor to Mr. Oehlmann, "New ski lift at Badger Pass" August 21, 1964. Yosemite National Park Archives, Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Adams-Badger, Folder Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

69 Memorandum from Charley Proctor to Mr. H. Oehlmann, President. "Proposed Double Chair Lift" March 29, 1965. Yosemite National Park Archives, Yosemite Park & Curry Company, Adams-Badger, Folder Badger Pass Chair Lift.

70 "Snowshoes, opera, solitude... Yosemite in Winter," *Sunset* (January 1988): 14.

71 "Badger Pass Celebrates...Fifty Golden Years!" 5.

unknown if improvements to the water system were completed. In 1996, emergency structural repairs, temporary shoring and waterproofing were made to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge.

More recently, emergency repairs were made to the lodge decks in 2005 and 2007. The ski rental building southwest of the 1954 building was closed and demolished in 2005 after it was deemed unsafe. The building was replaced by a new temporary building in 2006, located just east of the original lodge.

Despite the Yosemite Park & Curry Company's attempts to keep Badger Pass part of the modern ski culture, the ski field was often derided for its small size and lack of skiable elevation. By the 1980s, the ski area's new role as a family-centered ski area was acknowledged in NPS planning documents such as the *Yosemite General Management Plan* (1980). The *General Management Plan* stated that the goal for Badger Pass was to provide opportunities for family-oriented downhill skiing and other forms of winter recreation with its existing facilities.⁷² In 1991, the National Parks and Conservation Association urged the NPS to remove the ski area at Badger Pass; the group reasoned that the park's natural resources should be valued more highly than recreational interests. No documentary evidence of a formal response to this recommendation was located. However, the 2000 *Yosemite Valley Plan, Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement* called for the continued use of Badger Pass as a ski area. Though many expert skiers overlooked Badger Pass, preferring the newer, more exciting ski areas with more ski terrain, more difficult slopes, and larger and faster chair lifts, many beginners and families saw Badger Pass as a welcome respite from the sometimes overwhelming, large ski areas. This change in user demographics changed the character of Badger Pass Ski Area from an internationally recognized ski facility and ski school, to a family-focused recreational site within a national park.

72 National Park Service, General Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement, Yosemite National Park (1980): 51-53.



View of Badger Pass parking area in 1941. Source: Yosemite Research Library.



View of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge, looking northwest. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008.

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation Summary

The Badger Pass Ski Area is significant under National Register Criterion A (Event) in the area of Entertainment/Recreation as one of the first developed downhill ski areas in California. The period of significance is 1934 to 1953, covering the period that Badger Pass was at the forefront of California's ski culture as a leader in ski instruction and the setting for professional and amateur downhill competitions. Significant landscape characteristics identified for the Badger Pass Ski Area include natural systems and features, spatial organization, land use, circulation, topography, vegetation, buildings and structures, and views and vistas. Today, the physical features of the site's buildings and structures, as well as circulation patterns present during the period of significance remain, contributing to the property's ability to convey its significant associations. The individual contributing features of the site include: the Badger Pass Ski Lodge, Ranger Residence, Badger Pass Access Road, Original Parking Loop (1936), 1941 Parking Loop, Snowshoe Trail, Old Glacier Point Road Cross Country Ski Trail and Trailhead to Glacier Point Road Cross Country Ski Trail. The property's ability to convey its significant associations is enhanced by the site's natural systems, spatial organization, land use, topography, vegetation, and views and vistas, which contribute to the overall setting of the historic site. Together, the landscape characteristics of the site contribute to all seven aspects of its integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

The Badger Pass Ski Area is identified in the park's draft Multiple Property Document Form (MPDF) as a winter sports area within the "Resources Associated with Tourism, Recreation and the Preservation Ethic in Yosemite (1864-1973)" property type. The MPDF outlines registration requirements that properties must meet to be considered eligible for listing in the National Register. Under Criterion A, the property must "reflect aspects of Yosemite history that contributed to the growth of outdoor recreation, environmentalism, tourism or trends in the post-war leisure economy."⁷³ According to the MPDF, "the historic materials, form and setting, and association of the historic resource must be intact" and "properties or sites need to display integrity of original design, craftsmanship, and materials, and if possible be located in or on their original site."⁷⁴ The properties must also be associated with the property type of Tourism, Recreation, and the Preservation Ethic in Yosemite National Park.

Natural Systems and Features

The natural systems and features at Badger Pass are important organizing elements of the landscape. The overall geomorphology and geology of the site, including the relative location and relationship between the meadow and the mountains above, make this area attractive for the

73 Kirk and Palmer, Section F, p. 87-88.

74 Ibid.

location of downhill skiing. The native vegetation at Badger Pass has been retained and helps define and separate the ski slopes and surround the parking area.

Spatial Organization

The Badger Pass Ski Area's remote location and dramatic topography, which includes both low-lying open meadow and forested mountain peaks, requires extensive circulation and spatial organization systems so that a large number of visitors can navigate the site's terrain. The systems of roads, trails, ski lifts, and ski runs work in tandem to move visitors through the site. Over time, as visitation increased, these organizing site elements were modified to accommodate a greater number of visitors and vehicles. Although some landscape materials changed over time in response to maintenance and growth of the site, the overall spatial organization at Badger Pass, which is defined by a single access road, a series of parking loops, a central lodge building, and the bowl-shaped ski area, remains unchanged since its period of significance.

Land Use

The Badger Pass Ski Area was developed to provide permanent visitor facilities at an emerging popular ski area within Yosemite National Park. Today, Badger Pass continues to operate as a downhill and cross-country skiing facility and thrives as one of only two existing ski areas within a national park in the United States. In winter, the Badger Pass Ski Area functions as a cross-country and downhill ski facility and is characterized by snow-covered downhill ski runs and cross-country ski trails that traverse the site. During the summer, Badger Pass accommodates light visitation from hikers, bird watchers, naturalists, and tourists. The ski lodge is used as a base for NPS work crews during summer months; however, summer visitor use of the site is not organized by DNC or NPS and no facilities are provided for these uses. The land use of the site has remained unchanged since the period of significance.

Circulation

The vehicular, pedestrian, and recreational circulation patterns at Badger Pass remained throughout the period of significance and were expanded and upgraded in response to an increased number of visitors. Circulation patterns dating to the period of significance include the Badger Pass Access Road, the 1936 and 1941 parking loops, cross-country ski trails, and pedestrian circulation routes throughout the site. Early ski tows and lifts also provided visitor circulation throughout the site as necessitated for its use as a downhill ski area. Since the period of significance, two parking loops were added to the original parking area, new ski runs were created, and new ski lifts installed. The vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns at Badger Pass have remained largely intact since the period of significance, and were later expanded upon in response to an increased number of visitors

Topography

Topography is an important organizing feature of the Badger Pass landscape. Without the topographical diversity of the meadow and mountains, the area would not have developed as a downhill skiing facility. The natural topography of the site was somewhat altered over time to create ski runs out of the natural landscape. The ski runs were groomed and changed slightly over time to accommodate changing trends and advances in downhill skiing. The overall character of the topography at Badger Pass remains unchanged since its period of significance.

Vegetation

The native vegetation at Badger Pass defines and separates the ski slopes, and surrounds the parking area. In winter, the coniferous forest surrounding Badger Pass adds to the scenic quality of the skiing experience at the Badger Pass Ski Area. The vegetation at Badger Pass is sensitive in nature because of wetland habitat at the base of the Meadow. Some of the vegetation at Badger Pass has been removed or replaced since the end of the period of significance, including several screening trees from the original parking loop and vegetation between ski runs. Despite the removal and replacement of some individual features, the overall character and type of vegetation at Badger Pass remains unchanged since the period of significance. (See Appendix B: *Technical Memorandum, Wetland Characterization and Related Tasks, Badger Pass Ski Area Project* by LSA for detailed information on the vegetation of the Badger Pass Ski Area).

Buildings and Structures

Since the construction of the up-ski in 1934 and the Badger Pass Ski Lodge in 1935, buildings and structures have been an important component of the Badger Pass Ski Area. The establishment of buildings and structures on the site marked the official development of the ski area, and the subsequent changes in number and character of the buildings and structures were the physical manifestations of the rise of the ski area during the period of significance. Several alterations and additions were made to the buildings and structures at Badger Pass over time to accommodate the need for increased visitor capacity and services. Alterations and additions that occurred to the Badger Pass Ski Area after 1953 marked a shift in the programmatic focus of the site from a competitive downhill ski area to a more family-centered ski facility. These later additions obscured the original appearance of the Park Service Rustic style lodge with Swiss Chalet influences that Eldridge T. Spencer designed in 1935, and marked a clear departure from the sympathetic alterations and additions that were made during the period of significance. Additional buildings were constructed after the period of significance to meet the evolving programmatic needs of the ski area. Many of these buildings do not relate appropriately to historic views, vistas, and spatial organization, and are incompatible with the character of the area's historic buildings and structures. Of the fourteen buildings and structures within the Badger Pass Ski Area, only the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and the NPS Ranger Residence contribute to the site.

Views and Vistas

The Badger Pass Ski Area was designed to provide both inward and outward views of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and the surrounding scenic landscape. Many of the views and vistas associated with the Badger Pass Ski Area are still apparent, appear much as they did during the period of significance, and continue to contribute to the historic character of the site.

*Small-Scale Features*⁷⁵

There are a variety of small-scale features associated with the Badger Pass Ski Area that show the transition of the Badger Pass Ski Area from a single ski lodge building to a complex of buildings, structures, circulation elements, and associated features that support the recreational use of the site. Small-scale features at Badger Pass can be classified into the following categories: site furnishings, utilities and foundations. Although some of the small-scale features on the site remain from the period of significance, they do not retain sufficient integrity to be considered contributing features of the site. The majority of the small-scale features were installed or replaced after the period of significance and do not contribute to the historic character of the site.

Aspects of Integrity

The integrity of the Badger Pass Ski Area is evaluated by comparing landscape characteristics and features present during the period of significance (1934-1953) with current conditions.

Location

The Badger Pass Ski Area has remained in the same location and configuration within Yosemite National Park since its period of significance (1934 to 1953). All of the contributing features of the historic site have remained in their original locations since the period of significance. Therefore, the property retains integrity of location to convey its historic significance.

Design

Since the end of the period of significance in 1953, several features have been added to the Badger Pass Ski Area, and changes have occurred to individual contributing features of the site.

75 A separate small-scale features section is not included in the Analysis and Evaluation because, due to a lack of integrity, there are no contributing features associated with this landscape characteristic.

Changes that have occurred to the site since 1953 include the installation of new ski lifts and associated equipment, construction of two additional parking loops to allow for increased parking capacity, installation of temporary trailers and buildings to house ski equipment rentals, and installation of various non-contributing shelters used to facilitate ski operations and ski school service on the site. Many of the changes to the site are additive in nature and do not significantly alter the overall understanding and character of the design and layout of the site. For example, many of the non-contributing buildings and structures that were added to the site after 1953 could be removed in the future, as many of these are moveable or temporary features.

In addition to changes to the site over time, incompatible alterations and additions occurred to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge after the period of significance. These changes have compromised the architectural and structural integrity of the building and have diminished the building's integrity of design. However, as a contributing feature of a historic site, the building does retain sufficient historic integrity to convey its significance as associated with the historic site. The lodge is just one of several contributing features of the greater historic site, and the integrity of the design of the site as a whole, including all of its landscape characteristics and features, is what was evaluated to determine the overall integrity of design for the historic site.

Despite changes that have occurred over time, the Badger Pass Ski Area historic site (which is comprised of fourteen buildings and structures, and circulation systems, as well as natural systems, spatial organization, land use, topography, vegetation, and views and vistas) continues to retain integrity of design to convey its historic significance as one of California's first developed areas for downhill skiing.

Setting

Badger Pass was selected as a downhill ski area specifically for its setting, including its location in proximity to Glacier Point Road, its elevation, the site's natural bowl shape, north-facing slopes, scenic vegetation, and protected meadow, which is naturally situated to allow for the accumulation of snow fall from normal weather pattern systems. These factors combined made Badger Pass an attractive setting for downhill and cross-country skiing. Although changes have been made to individual contributing features of the site, including buildings and structures, and circulation patterns, these changes do not affect the overall character of the setting of the Badger Pass Ski Area. Therefore, the property retains sufficient integrity of setting to convey its historic significance.

Materials

Despite alterations and additions to buildings, structures, and circulation systems, the historic materials of the Badger Pass Ski Area remain largely intact. Original materials, including wetland, meadow, and forest vegetation; circulations systems; natural systems and features;

views and vistas, and associated elements have remained relatively unchanged since the period of significance.

The majority of the alterations to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge were additive in nature and much of the original building materials remain, although they are obscured by later additions. The lodge is just one of several contributing features of the greater historic site, and the integrity of materials of the site as a whole, including all of its landscape characteristics and features, is what was evaluated to determine the overall integrity of design for the historic site.

Despite changes that have occurred over time to the historic materials, the Badger Pass Ski Area historic site (which is comprised of fourteen buildings and structures, and circulation systems, as well as natural systems, spatial organization, land use, topography, vegetation, and views and vistas) continues to retain integrity of materials to convey its historic significance as one of California's first developed areas for downhill skiing.

Workmanship

A high level of workmanship was required to transform Badger Pass from a pristine natural area into an aesthetically pleasing and functional winter sports facility. This workmanship included the creation of ski runs through grading and manipulation of existing terrain and vegetation, as well as the introduction of buildings, structures, circulation systems, and other necessary facilities to the site. This workmanship remains evident at the Badger Pass Ski Area today, and therefore, the property retains sufficient integrity of workmanship to convey its historic significance.

Feeling

The feeling of the Badger Pass Ski Area is characterized by its remote location, its access via the historic Glacier Point Road, and its appearance as a rustic historic ski area. Upon the establishment of the Badger Pass Ski Area in 1934, the site flourished through the mid-1950s and experienced continual growth into an influential ski area and teaching facility. The ski area today is one of the only downhill ski facilities in the United States located in a national park and continues to experience high levels of visitation in the winter months. Therefore, the property retains sufficient integrity of feeling to convey its historic significance.

Association

The Badger Pass Ski Area is associated with the early development of winter sports, recreation, and tourism in Yosemite National Park and the western United States, and its association with

these historic contexts is still evident. Therefore, the property retains sufficient integrity of association to convey its historic significance.

Summary

The location, setting, workmanship, feeling and association of the site remain as originally conceived during the period of significance. Despite some alterations to individual contributing features, such as additions to buildings, and expansion of circulation systems, the site's overall design and materials have not been unduly compromised. As a whole, the site retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance for the entire period of significance from 1934 to 1953

Landscape Characteristics

Natural Systems and Features

The Badger Pass Ski Area is located in Monroe Meadow at the south rim of the Yosemite Valley. The Central Sierra Nevada Mountains in Yosemite National Park greatly vary in elevation from 1,700 to 13,000 feet. The Badger Pass site is characterized by a flat meadow at an elevation of approximately 7,200 feet with rolling, north-facing slopes and mountains that rise from the base of the meadow to a maximum elevation of approximately 7,800 feet. The area is lined with conifers leading to the protected meadow below, and the topography of the site provides adequate terrain for downhill and cross-country skiing. The natural systems and features of the site provided an attractive location for the development of the Badger Pass Ski Area in the early-1930s.

Geomorphology and Geology

Development of the Badger Pass Ski Area was possible because of the area's geomorphologic and geological features, and the restrictions and opportunities presented by these features on the site. The relatively flat, open area of the meadow marked an obvious location for the lodge and the rise of the surrounding, north-facing, glaciated mountain slopes provided attractive terrain for the location of the ski runs, as evidenced by records of skiing at the Old Badger Pass Summit beginning in the early 1930s. The gradation in slope elevation dictated the location of ski runs and allowed for the creation of a range of difficulty levels within the ski area, including easy, moderate and difficult downhill ski runs as well as cross-country ski terrain. Individual features including rock outcrops along the site boundary and parking area, and Little Half Dome—a large boulder located at the top of the ridgeline near the Chipmunk Ski Runs—provide interesting focal points throughout the site.

Hydrology

The Badger Pass Ski Area encompasses a bowl-shaped meadow traversed by perennial Grouse Creek. Runoff from surrounding uplands drains to the meadow and Grouse Creek via overland flow and several minor tributaries, at least one of which is spring fed. The site configuration contributes to a shallow water table in the meadow throughout much of the year, at times resulting in surface expression as standing water. The seasonal saturation of Monroe Meadow influenced the location and design of buildings and structures within the meadow to avoid and account for potential water infiltration. The unique character of the wetlands creates an attractive habitat for rare and sensitive species, several of which are associated with the Badger Pass Ski Area.

Climate

The temperate climate of the Yosemite Valley typically features long, hot summers and mild winters. Badger Pass is located in Yosemite's higher terrain, and is well suited for downhill skiing because it receives several feet of snow between November and May. Temperatures in Yosemite range from an average of 26 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter to an average of 90 degrees Fahrenheit in summer, and yearly cycles include periods of intense snow, rain, and drought. The Badger Pass Ski Area was designed with features to accommodate heavy snow loads, including the wide overhanging roof eaves, heavy timber framing, and elevated deck of the lodge; and wide lanes for the Badger Pass Access Road and parking area to allow for snow plows to access the site.

Native Vegetation and Vegetation Types

Yosemite National Park is characterized by a diverse and complex variety of plant species. The vegetation in Badger Pass is characterized by meadow, wetland, and mountain ecosystems. The confluence of these natural systems at Badger Pass allows for the survival of a variety of plant species in this area. The vegetation types in the vicinity of the Badger Pass Ski Area include willow thicket, graminoid and forb wetlands, red fir forest, upland forb field, and upland grassland. The native vegetation at Badger Pass has been retained and helps define and separate the ski slopes and surround the parking area.

The vegetation at Badger Pass can be divided into two broad types – wetland vegetation and upland vegetation. The wetland vegetation is further broken down as wetland thicket, graminoid wetland and forb wetland, while the upland vegetation can be classified as red fir forest, upland forb field and upland grassland.

Monroe Meadow and much of the lower ski slopes are covered with wetland vegetation. A willow thicket stands east of the lodge and smaller clumps of willows are located west of the lodge. Other distinct masses of willow occur near Turtle Run. Many of the medium height shrubs throughout the parking islands are willow.

Graminoid wetland is the most wet vegetation type, located in areas of boggy soils and standing water year round. This vegetation type occurs along the path of the spring and feeds Grouse Creek, which runs parallel to the lodge deck and out into Monroe Meadow. Species found in the graminoid wetland include blue-joint reed grass in large, dense masses; Kentucky blue-grass, ticklegrass, and cow-bane. Additional graminoid wetland occurs near the top of the Bruin Run and elsewhere within the Site boundary.

Forb wetland occurs further up the ski slopes and throughout the cross-country skiing instruction area. Indicator species of this vegetation type include: bog lupine, scarlet Indian paintbrush, arrow-leaved groundsel, Bigelow's sneezeweed, California corn lily, angelica, Sierra lily and hedge nettle. In late summer, dense areas of meadow goldenrod appear near Grouse Creek, throughout the parking islands, and on the slopes adjacent to the parking areas.

Within the herbaceous wetlands, a number of species of wild orchid have been recorded: *Platanthera dilatata* var. *leucostachys* with small, creamy white flowers; and *Platanthera yosemitensis* with yellow flowers. (See Special Status Species in the report by LSA for more information). Other potentially present special status species include: Short-leaved hulsea, Yosemite lewsia, parasol or Bolander's clover and potentially *Leucothoe davisiae*.

Trees in the Red Fir Forest predominantly feature 1-foot-diameter trunks at breast height with some trees reaching diameters of two and three feet in size. The fir is a relatively narrow, coniferous tree reaching heights of 60 - 125 feet. The understory of the original 1936 parking island is somewhat unique in that it consists predominantly of *Ribes* on the uphill portion and bracken fern in the lower portion. This island is uniformly shady whereas some of the other islands are quite sunny because the tree canopy has been heavily thinned or entirely removed. The understory beneath the Red fir in the remaining parking islands is more mixed and includes greater numbers of flowering shrubs and wildflowers.

Species found in the Upland Forb Field vegetation type are similar to those in the Forb Wetland. The main difference between these two types is the conditions of wetland hydrology and hydric soils. The Upland Forb Fields are found on the higher slopes above the lodge. Indicator species include large masses of goldenrod with yarrow, cow parsnip, Brewer's aster, blue wildrye, squirrel-tail grass and monument plant.

Upland grassland occurs on the upper portions of the ski slopes and at the ridgeline where soils are drier and shallower. Predominant species are blue wild rye and squirrel-tail grass.

(See Appendix B: *Technical Memorandum, Wetland Characterization and Related Tasks, Badger Pass Ski Area Project* by LSA for detailed information on the vegetation of the Badger Pass Ski Area).



Little Half Dome. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008.



View of Monroe Meadow. Source: PGADesign, 2008.



Grouse Creek and wetland. Source: PGADesign, 2008



Example Upland Forb. Source: PGADesign, 2008

Spatial Organization

Spatial organization at Badger Pass is dominated by circulation features, natural systems, and site topography. The spatial organization at Badger Pass has changed slightly over time in response to increased visitation. However, the overall spatial organization, which includes the circulation, views, topography, cluster arrangement, and natural features at the Badger Pass Ski Area, remains largely intact and appears today much as it did during the period of significance.

Historically, the ski area expanded from Old Badger Pass Summit, which is located in the northeast portion of the current ski area, and was the first run for downhill skiing at Badger Pass. With the addition of the up-ski in 1934, the ski jump in 1941, the Nordic Ski Training Area and Cross-Country Ski Training Area in 1986, and additional lifts throughout the site, the ski area expanded to its current extent.

The spatial organization of the site is greatly influenced by the meadow, the lowest point of the site at 7,200 feet, and the ski runs that rise from the base of the meadow and reach a maximum elevation of 7,800 feet. Monroe Meadow is an important organizing feature and appears on park maps that pre-date the establishment of the Badger Pass Ski Area. The meadow was very important to the development of the site as an area for downhill skiing because it was close to the north-facing slopes, and its flat and protected character made it an attractive location for construction of a ski lodge. The contrast between the meadow and the ski runs is accentuated by stands of conifer trees that frame the site and delineate the site boundary, screen the parking area from the lodge, and provide a physical barrier between each of the downhill ski runs.

As the ski area grew and the number of visitors to the site increased, a series of circulation systems was put in place to accommodate both vehicular and pedestrian circulation. These circulation systems included roads, parking loops, downhill ski runs, cross-country ski trails, ski lifts and maintenance roads and trails.

Historically, views and vistas were important organizing features, as they provided visitors with an impression of their location within the Badger Pass Ski Area and Yosemite National Park. Views and vistas continue to be important organizing features today. Vistas from the Badger Pass Access Road to the lodge and slopes help mark visitor entry and navigation through the site, and views from the slopes to the lodge orient visitors to their location within the ski area. Views from the lodge to the slopes and outward views from the tops of the lifts and the Old Badger Pass Summit provide scenic glimpses of the ski area and orient visitors to their location within the greater Yosemite National Park, which offers an interesting connection to the Yosemite landscape within an otherwise secluded area of the park.



View of Badger Pass ski slopes, looking south. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008

Land Use

The primary land use at Badger Pass has been largely focused on winter sports and recreation since the early twentieth century. Land uses predating winter recreation include transportation and probable subsistence activities by aboriginal populations. From the first documented use of the site in the early 1930s for cross-country skiing, to development of the site as a downhill ski area beginning in 1934, facilities and circulation systems were necessary to provide access and services to visitors. The site's recreational land uses are historically important and continue to thrive today.

Recreational Use- Winter Sports

With the establishment of skiing at Chinquapin in 1932, Badger Pass became an important route for cross-country skiers making the journey between Chinquapin and Glacier Point. Use of the Badger Pass Summit for downhill skiing was recorded as early as 1933. The Old Badger Pass Run from the Badger Pass Summit to Monroe Meadow was used during this period as a downhill

ski run. This run is no longer used as part of the downhill ski operations and is only accessible from the Snowshoe Trail, and is located at the eastern edge of the site boundary. As visitation increased at Monroe Meadow and the Badger Pass Summit in the early 1930s, the Yosemite Park & Curry Company advocated for the construction of facilities to support downhill skiing at Badger Pass. The unique natural systems, topography, and location of Monroe Meadow made it an attractive location for a new downhill skiing area with permanent facilities. In 1934, upon the construction of the up-ski and clearing of ski runs, the site was officially established as the primary downhill ski area in Yosemite National Park.

After downhill ski facilities were developed at Badger Pass, ski competitions were held at the site and an international ski school was established. Modern equipment and buildings and structures were added to support ski activities and visitor services on site. An example of these structures is the Ski School Bell, which dates to at least 1935 and was rung to signal the start of ski school classes each day from its historic location at the base of the Bruin Run. As advances in mechanical technology were developed throughout its history, Badger Pass adopted new ski lifts and ski slope maintenance equipment. During the period of significance, a ski jump was built in 1941, and the Badger Pass Ski School became an influential institution in the early 1940s.

Concrete foundations and ruins of former lifts were located during the August 2008 site visit. An example is the Ruins of the Old Beaver T-Bar Lift. The Old Beaver T-Bar Lift was installed circa 1946 and provided access to the Old Badger Pass Summit. This lift was struck by a falling tree in 1982 and condemned. The lift was removed in 1986 when the new Eagle Lift was installed. Today, the wood foundation of the lift remains and marks the original location of this feature. Access to this point is limited to foot access via the Snowshoe Trail at the northeast extent of the project boundary. Although this feature was constructed during the period of significance and is significant as an early ski lift, it does not retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance.

As the Badger Pass Ski Area grew and buildings, structures and circulation features were added to the site, there arose a need for site furnishings to support the recreational use of the site. Site furnishings vary from signage to walls to curbs in the parking area. A variety of small-scale utility features at Badger Pass were discovered during the August 2008 site visit. These features include a fuel tank located in the maintenance area and evidence of the site's septic system including a septic exhaust pipe. Research did not uncover detailed information about the historic utility systems, other than the existence of the water tower at Badger Pass. The entire site was developed to accommodate the primary land use of outdoor winter sports and continues to function in this capacity today.

In winter, the ski runs were the most prominent feature reflecting the land use of the site. The downhill ski runs fan out from the meadow and extend south, east and west along the north-facing mountain slopes on the south side of the lodge. The Badger Pass ski runs have been in place since 1934, although the exact locations, grading and appearance of individual runs have slightly changed over time. Today, the ten downhill ski runs at Badger Pass include the Turtle, Beaver, Rabbit, Eagle, Red Fox, Wildcat, Chipmunk, Badger, Bruin, and Gray Owl runs.



Winter use of the Badger Pass Ski Area. Source: Jim Vandenberg, 2009.

Recreational Use-Summer

During the summer months, the ski runs and trails function as meadows and open spaces. Throughout its history, the ski area unofficially accommodated recreational uses for visitors in the summer months, and use of the Badger Pass Ski Area as a base for California Youth Conservation Corps and emergency fire crews. Today, recreational summer activities include the use of the ski trails for hiking and birdwatching. Summertime use of the site is limited by its relatively remote location, its lack of any facilities to accommodate summer uses, and the fact that the park does not promote summer visitation to Badger Pass. Therefore, winter sports remain the primary focus of the land use at Badger Pass.

Circulation

The circulation at the Badger Pass Ski Area includes a system of vehicular and pedestrian paths that provide access to the site, and together with a series of ski lifts and downhill and cross-country ski trails, provide circulation through the ski area. Vehicles have always been crucial to the access and experience of Badger Pass because of the site's remote location within the park. It was not until after the All-Weather Highway (State Route 140) was constructed in 1926 that winter access to the park was first made possible for many visitors. Winter vehicle access to the Badger Pass Ski Area was first provided from the west via the Chinquapin to Bridalveil Creek

section of the New Glacier Point Road, which was completed in 1933. Several historic circulation patterns are still in use at Badger Pass, including the Badger Pass Access Road, early parking loops, the Snowshoe Trail, and cross-country trails.

Contributing Circulation

Badger Pass Access Road

Approximately 5 miles from the turnoff onto Glacier Point Road is the Badger Pass Access Road, which provides entry to the ski area and parking lots. This approximately 0.2-mile road was constructed concurrently with the ski lodge to provide vehicular entry into the site. The road begins at an elevation of approximately 7180 feet at the junction of Glacier Point Road and rises to an elevation of approximately 7240 feet where it joins the Original Parking Loop near the ski lodge. The Badger Pass Access Road was designed to provide tree-framed vistas to the lodge and ski area beyond. This visual experience was an important part of the visitor experience at Badger Pass throughout its history. The road was widened by the CCC in 1938; however, this change did not significantly alter the character of the road, its relationship to the ski area, or associated framed views. Today, the view of the lodge from the access road has been obscured by the 1954-1956 addition and a support trailer parked to the west of the lodge in the summer months.

The paved asphalt road measures approximately 22'-0" wide and is severely cracked and unevenly patched. Currently the road is in fair condition and is in the process of undergoing repairs. The road does not have curbs, and is instead defined by a 2'-0" to 4'-0" sandy embankment on either side. The character of the road is defined by its slightly curved shape, width, cross slope and pitch at the curves, as well as its slightly upward slope towards the Badger Pass Ski Lodge. The Badger Pass Access Road contributes to the site as the major circulation route providing vehicular access to the Badger Pass Ski Area.

Original Parking Loop

The Original Parking Loop is located just north of the ski lodge, accessed via the Badger Pass Access Road to the west. The loop was completed in 1936 and features a slight slope upwards to the northeast. When first constructed, the parking loop consisted of a loop road with the capacity for 200 vehicles and included screening vegetation in the center of the loop.⁷⁶

The loop is oriented east-to-west and features an island with a stand of conifer trees and two footpaths that lead from the parking loop to the north lodge entrance. The east end of the loop begins at an elevation of approximately 7220 feet and rises to the west to approximately 7260 feet. The asphalt road that creates the loop varies between 37'-0" and 43'-0" wide. It broadens to 53'-0" on the eastern side where it connects with the 1987 Parking Loop. The road is cracked

76 Superintendent's Monthly Reports, November 1935, Yosemite Research Library.

and has evidence of previous patching. In front of the lodge there is a 6"x6" cement curb. Between the curb and the building there is a 9'x6" paved asphalt ditch. The Original Parking Loop contributes to the site as a feature that was designed to accommodate visitor use of the site during the period of significance.

1941 Parking Loop (Expansion 1)

The parking area was expanded to the north in several campaigns, the first of which was completed in 1941 and provided capacity for an additional 200 vehicles. The 1941 Parking Loop is located in the middle of the three parking extension loops to the north of the original loop. The loop includes a paved asphalt road and screening vegetation located in the center of the loop. The road is relatively flat in character and is elevated slightly above the Original Parking Loop at an elevation of approximately 7260 feet.

The road that creates the loop averages between 64'-0" and 56'-0" in width throughout the loop and is cracked in many areas. The loop road narrows to the south where it intersects with the Original Parking Loop. The southwestern entrance to the loop is 24'-0" with about a 3'-0" shoulder on the northeastern edge. The southeastern entrance is 32'-0". The 1941 Parking Loop contributes to the site as a feature that was designed to accommodate increased visitor capacity during the period of significance and is of a similar scale, design and character as the Original Parking Loop.

Snowshoe Trail

The Snowshoe Trail was established with the development of the Badger Pass Ski Area in 1934. The trail begins at the eastern side of the Meadow just above the Turtle Rope Tow. The trail climbs the slope of the Old Badger Pass Ski Run, once providing access to the Badger Pass Summit. The trail continues past the Badger Pass Summit to the northeast extent of the site boundary, where it turns and runs south along the ridgeline towards the tops of the Beaver and Rabbit ski runs. The trail ends along the ridgeline between the tops of the Rabbit and Eagle ski runs. Portions of the trail are marked with signage that reads "Ski Area Boundary." This signage was added to the trail upon establishment of the Yosemite Wilderness Boundary in 1984. The trail consists of an unpaved dirt surface that is groomed in the winter and lined by stands of conifer trees. The Snowshoe Trail contributes to the site as a feature that provided cross-country and snowshoe access through the site during the period of significance, was an important part of the early experience of Badger Pass, and continues to function in this capacity today.

Old Glacier Point Road Cross-Country Ski Trail

The Old Glacier Point Road Cross-Country Ski Trail (1882) follows the Old Glacier Point Road, which traversed the site and provided access to Monroe Meadow prior to the construction of the Chinquapin to Bridalveil Creek portion of the New Glacier Point Road in 1932. The Old Glacier

Point Road Cross-Country Ski Trail is one of several cross-country ski trails within the boundary of the Badger Pass Ski Area. The trail enters the site just beyond the maintenance yard at the western edge of the site boundary. This portion of the trail is known as the Chinquapin Trail, and is part of the Old Glacier Point Road. The trail continues through the developed portion of the site, and once crossed directly through the current location of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge. The trail picks up just below the southeastern corner of the Original Parking Loop and continues up the slope of the Old Badger Pass Ski Run roughly running parallel to the Snowshoe Trail. The trail crosses the site boundary just west of the Badger Pass Summit and continues on to Glacier Point from this location. The Old Glacier Point Road Cross Country Ski Trail was actively used prior to the establishment of the ski area in 1934, throughout the period of significance, and continues to be used for cross-country skiing today. The trail contributes to the significance of the site as an early cross-country ski area in Yosemite National Park and was adapted during the period of significance to serve the recreational winter use of the site for cross-country and downhill skiing.

Trailhead to Glacier Point Road Cross-Country Ski Trail

The Trailhead to Glacier Point Road Cross-Country Ski Trail (circa 1933) is one of several cross-country ski trails within the boundary of the Badger Pass Ski Area. This trail was actively used prior to the establishment of the ski area in 1934, throughout the period of significance, and continues to be used today. The trail is made of uneven packed dirt with moderate ground cover vegetation. The width of the trail is consistently approximately 12'-0" and is lined with stand of tall conifer trees. The trail contributes to the significance of the site as an early cross-country ski area in Yosemite National Park and was adapted during the period of significance to serve the recreational winter use of the site for cross-country and downhill skiing.



Badger Pass Access Road, looking south. Source: NPS, 2009.



Original Parking Loop, upper portion of loop, looking east. Source: NPS, 2009.



1941 Parking Loop, looking south. Source: NPS, 2009.



Typical character of Snowshoe Trail. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008.



Location of Old Glacier Point Road Cross-Country Ski Trail, looking southeast across Monroe Meadow. Source: NPS, 2009.

(Note: The Old Glacier Point Road predated the development of the Badger Pass Ski Area and traversed the site in the general location of the stands of trees to the left side of this photograph. The exact location of the road is indicated on the site plan included in this document. The location of the road on the site plan was drawn from the site plan completed by Newfields for the Glacier Point Road Historic District in 2007, and is based on Newfields field survey of the site).



Trailhead to Glacier Point Road Cross-Country Ski Trail, looking north. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008.

Non-Contributing Circulation

1958 Parking Loop

The parking area was expanded in 1958, after Badger Pass's period of significance. The 1958 expansion marked the second parking expansion and was created in response to the demand for additional visitor parking. This parking loop is located to the west of the 1941 Parking Loop at an elevation of approximately 7220 feet and slopes slightly upwards to the east to an elevation of approximately 7250 feet. The NPS Ranger Residence is located at the south end of this loop. This expansion nearly tripled the size of the original 1936 parking loop and was of a larger scale and different design than the Original Parking Loop and 1941 Parking Loop.

The 1958 Parking Loop includes paved asphalt road with screening vegetation in the center of the loop. The southern end of the 1958 Parking Loop road is 54'-0" wide with 3'-0" to 3'-6" sand shoulders. Currently, the road is undergoing extensive repairs to repair large cracks and resolve other maintenance issues, and is covered with dirt and debris from construction. Evidence of gravel patching is also evident at the base of the road.

Although the 1958 Parking Loop is compatible with the 1936 and 1941 parking loops in terms of its relationship to topography and use of similar screening vegetation, it is not compatible with the scale of the Original Parking Loop and was constructed after the period of significance.

ca. 1987 Parking Loop

The completion of the circa 1987 Parking Loop marked the third and final expansion of the parking area. This expansion included the addition of a helicopter pad and additional capacity for vehicles. This parking loop is located at an elevation of approximately 7270 feet.

The loop consists of a paved asphalt road with screening vegetation in the center of the loop. The road is consistently 64'-0" wide throughout the loop and the road surface has limited cracking. The road is currently under construction and is covered with dirt and debris from the construction. No curbs or shoulders were visible as part of the loop.

Although the ca. 1987 Parking Loop is compatible with the 1936 and 1941 parking loops in terms of its relationship to topography and use of similar screening vegetation, it is not compatible with the scale of the Original Parking Loop and was constructed after the period of significance.

Maintenance Roads and Trails

The Badger Pass Ski Area includes a series of maintenance roads and trails used by staff to access the site during the off season. These roads and trails provide access by four-wheel drive vehicles in the summertime to almost every part of the 282-acre site and consist of dirt tracks and trails up and down the ski runs, as well as through the Maintenance Yard. The various roads and trails appear to date to the 1960s.

The road to the Maintenance Yard at the northwestern edge of the site is a paved asphalt road measuring approximately 17'-0" in width. The northwestern side of the road has a 4'-0" dirt and gravel shoulder and vegetation is located approximately 0'-6" from the pavement. The road is in good condition and the asphalt is cracked in many areas.

A maintenance trail provides access to the ski runs and extends from the Maintenance Yard to the south, climbing the slope between the Bruin and Badger ski runs. The trail crosses to the east through the Badger Ski Run and continues up the slope of the Chipmunk Ski Run. At the top of the Chipmunk Ski Run, the trail branches along the Gray Owl Ski Run to the west to provide access to the top of the Bruin Ski Run. The trail also branches to the east, approximately following the site boundary to the tops of the Eagle and Red Fox ski runs, where it turns and continues along the site boundary to where it ends at the top of the Beaver Ski Run. This trail consists of dirt tracks, appears to be in good condition, and is only evident in the summer months.

Turkey Trails

The turkey trails are not sanctioned ski runs, but are paths created by skiers through the trees that occur at the top of most ski runs. The turkey trails follow the natural terrain created by the

drifting snow to form a ski trail. The turkey trails are ephemeral features and are not maintained like the ten main ski runs at Badger Pass.

Cross Country Trail

The Cross Country Trail is located within the northeastern portion of the site boundary and was first created with the establishment of the Nordic Ski Training program at Badger Pass in 1986. This trail is ephemeral in nature and is groomed each winter to provide access to skier between the Cross Country Ski Rental building and the Nordic Ski Training Area to the northeast. There is no evidence of this trail in the summer months.

Topography

The Badger Pass Ski Area is located in the southeast portion of Yosemite National Park. The site is accessed via Glacier Point Road, which provides access to higher elevations in the park. The turn off from Glacier Point Road to the Badger Pass Access Road starts at an elevation of 7,180 feet and rises to elevation 7,215 feet where it intersects with the lowest parking area. The lodge and associated buildings are at 7,230 feet elevation. The Badger Pass Access Road continues to rise at an even, gentle slope from the lowest parking area to an elevation of 7,253 feet at the east end of the entry drive.

The site has a bowl-shaped form; the surrounding, north-facing mountains form the sides of the bowl and Monroe Meadow provides the generally level base. The north-facing nature of the mountains is important in that little direct sunlight is received, which helps preserve accumulated snow due to less moisture evaporation and snow melt than would be experienced by south-facing slopes. The tops of the surrounding mountains are rounded or dome-shaped, unlike the steep peaks found elsewhere in the park. The mountains at Badger Pass create the impression of a comfortable, human-scaled space that notably differs from the awe-inspiring and often overwhelming sense of scale one gets when viewing the surrounding peaks from Yosemite Valley.

The elevation within the parking areas ranges from 7,215 to 7,280 feet, a total rise of 65 feet. The ski slopes range in elevation from 7,230 to 7,800 feet, a total rise of 570 feet. The gently sloped ski runs at the sides of the site's bowl and its variety of grades appeal to all levels of skiers. The Old Badger Pass Ski Run, the original run, has the most gradual slope at 12%. Turtle Run is a fairly uniform 15%. Bruin Run varies from 9% to 17%. The Eagle Run combines gentle slopes at 9% with a long section at 20% on the lower portion of the run. Badger Run provides the steepest challenge at 26%.

The topography of the Badger Pass Ski Area continues to reflect the character of the site's topography during the period of significance.

Vegetation

The native vegetation at Badger Pass was purposefully retained and used to define and separate the ski slopes and surround the parking area. In the past, some areas of trees were felled to create ski runs in the forest for the skiers and additional trees were planted where necessary to add density to the existing vegetation. The bands of trees not only define the runs but frame views and provide a strong sense of enclosure. The trees that surround the site reinforce its natural bowl shape.

In winter, when most visitors experience Badger Pass, the landscape and ski slopes are dominated by coniferous forest made up predominantly of red fir with a few lodgepole pine. The vegetation is draped in heavy snow and there are a few species of shrubs in the understory, such as bush chinquapin.

During the non-ski seasons of late spring, summer and fall, vegetation flourishes at Badger Pass. In spring and summer, the thickets of willow in the wetland areas leaf out as do other deciduous species and wildflowers and flowering shrubs bloom in Monroe Meadow. The seasonal change of the landscape is important, as the snow layer provides vital ecological functions and protects the meadow during the winter season.

The vegetation at Badger Pass is sensitive because of the wetland habitat at the base of the meadow. Some of the individual vegetation features at Badger Pass were removed or replaced over time, including several screening trees from the original parking loop, and some of the vegetation between ski runs. Despite removal and replacement of some individual features, the overall character and type of vegetation at Badger Pass remains unchanged since the period of significance.

The vegetation at Badger Pass was dramatically manipulated to create the ski area. In many areas, the native vegetation has been retained and used to define and separate the ski slopes and surround the parking area; however, other areas of forest have been cleared or thinned in order to construct the Badger Pass Access Road, parking, ski lodge, maintenance buildings, support structures, and the ski slopes. Site improvements have also altered the site's hydrology. The impervious paving of the parking lot caused localized run off. The installation of a drainage system affects how water is collected and dispersed downstream. Site hydrology was significantly changed at Badger Pass when buildings and parking areas were constructed during and after the period of significance. The wetland and meadow ecology have not changed dramatically since the period of significance and contribute to the setting of the historic site.



Snow covered conifers. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008

Buildings and Structures

Originally, the Badger Pass Ski Lodge (1935) was the only building at the Badger Pass Ski Area. The number of buildings increased over time as visitor facilities proved necessary in response to increased visitation. Shortly after the ski area was established, the NPS Ranger Residence (historically known as the Ranger Station) was completed in 1940 to support the safety of the ski operations and provide NPS presence on the site. A Water Tower was constructed as early as 1942 to provide much needed infrastructure to support visitor services on site (this feature was replaced in circa 1988 with a new water tower).

Several ancillary buildings and structures were constructed over time to support operation of the ski area, and the lodge was altered several times through a series of building campaigns to expand capacity and operations. Today, there are fourteen buildings and structures associated with the Badger Pass Ski Area, two of which contribute to the significance of the site.

Contributing Buildings and Structures

Badger Pass Ski Lodge

The Badger Pass Ski Lodge was constructed in 1935 to provide permanent facilities for downhill skiing operations at Badger Pass. Located at the base of Monroe Meadow, the original building was designed in the Park Service Rustic style with Swiss Chalet style influences by Eldridge T. Spencer. The two-story, wood frame building featured cubic massing, a dramatic gable roof, and rustic wood finishes. The main (north) façade faced the parking area while the rear (south) façade faced the meadow and the ski slopes above.

Almost immediately upon completion of the lodge, plans were made to expand its facilities and the building underwent a series of alterations over time. These alterations began as early as 1936 and included minor alterations in 1938, major alterations completed between 1954 and 1956, when a shed-roof addition was constructed to the west of the original lodge. Additional alterations were made between 1957 and 1968, the building was stabilized in 1996, and emergency deck repairs were made in 2005 and 2007.

Currently, the Badger Pass Ski Lodge houses the ticketing, food services, restrooms, meeting space, and offices associated with the ski operations on site. The lodge complex includes the historic 1935 lodge building in the center, the 1954 addition to the west and the Temporary Downhill Equipment Rental Trailer (added in 2005) to the east, as well as a large deck to the south that creates a connected walkway between these separate buildings. As a result of the alterations and additions made to the building after the end of the period of significance in 1953, the appearance of the building has morphed from its original design. These changes include the infilling of some windows with material similar to adjacent vertical log siding. Light fixtures have been replaced with contemporary fixtures and other utility items have been added over the years to provide television and phone service to the site. The roof was replaced with regular coursed asphalt shingles and has been patched in various locations with dissimilar material. In many areas, the original exterior finishes have been obscured with a bark brown flat color and white highlights of the structural elements. Original rustic features of the building that remain include: the wood frame structure, front gable roof with wide overhanging eaves, and natural bark half-log siding (which is partially obscured). Original rustic features of the buildings that have been removed include the original balconies with railings featuring decorative cut-outs; and the majority of the rectangular, multi-light casement windows.

Although the appearance of the building reflects the many additions and alterations made to it over time and differs from its appearance during the period of significance, the overall character, use, and understanding of the building and its function within the greater site is clearly evident. The building is an important contributing feature of the Badger Pass Ski Area historic site.



Badger Pass Ski Lodge, looking north. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008.



Badger Pass Ski Lodge, looking south. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008.

NPS Ranger Residence

In 1930 to 1940, the CCC constructed the NPS Ranger Residence (historically known as the Ranger Station), the first permanent NPS building at Badger Pass. The building was completed in January 1940, and located across the Badger Pass Access Road, north of the lodge and directly west of the median of the original parking loop.⁷⁷ The Ranger Residence is a one-story, wood frame building on a stone foundation, designed in a simplified Park Service Rustic style, with wide overhanging eaves supported by large brackets, vertical wood siding, and coursed rubble stone chimneys. The main entrance is located at the southeast side of the building and is accessed by a flight of concrete stairs. The rectangular-plan building is covered with a gable roof. The main entrance is located within a small gable-roof entry porch, which was added at a later date.

⁷⁷ Memorandum for the Regional Director, Region IV, from H.L. Crowley, Acting Regional Engineer, Yosemite National Park Archives, Old Central File Collection, Maps 1937-1944, Folder 124.

There is also an addition at the rear of the building. Currently, the building is used as a residence for NPS rangers.



NPS Ranger Residence, c. 1939. Source: Yosemite Research Library.



NPS Ranger Residence, looking west, 2008. Source: Page & Turnbull.

Non-Contributing Buildings and Structures

Water Tower

A historic site plan of Badger Pass indicates the presence of the water tower (also known as the water tank) by 1942, located in the vegetated area to the east of the lodge. This feature provided much needed infrastructure to support visitor services on site and was important to the overall operation of the ski area during the period of significance. No additional information was found about the historic appearance of the feature. The water tower was replaced in circa 1988 with a new water tower structure in the same location as the historic feature.

NPS Ranger Station

The current NPS Ranger Station was constructed at an unknown date and moved from Foresta to its current location at Badger Pass in 1969. The two-story, A-frame building features a steeply-pitched gable roof that nearly reaches the ground. The building faces southeast and is located west of the lodge in the maintenance area. Currently, the building is a first aid facility and the on-site NPS center of operations.

Cross-Country Equipment Rental Building

The Cross-Country Equipment Rental Building was built circa 1986 and is located to the northeast of the lodge across the Badger Pass Access Road within the southeast portion of the original parking loop median. The temporary, one-story, rectangular-plan, wood frame building is oriented to the south and has a standing-seam metal, gable roof. Currently, the building houses cross-country ski and snowshoe rental operations.

Temporary Downhill Equipment Rental Trailer

The temporary Downhill Equipment Rental Building was sited in 2005 and is located adjacent to the east side of the lodge. The trailer is oriented to the north and there is a small alley between this building and the lodge to the west that leads to a shared lower deck on the south side. The temporary wood frame building sits on a concrete foundation and is capped by a combination gable and shed roof. Currently, the building houses the downhill ski rental operations.

Maintenance Garage and storage containers

The Maintenance Garage was constructed circa 1980 and is located to the west of the lodge in the approximate center of the maintenance area. This wood frame, rectangular-plan building is

the largest in the maintenance area and is capped by a shed-roof and features board-and-batten veneer siding. Located directly northwest of the Maintenance Garage are several storage tanks for fuel and equipment. Currently, the Maintenance Garage is used for storage of maintenance equipment and repair.

Maintenance Shed

The Maintenance Shed appears to have been constructed circa 1971 and was formerly a residence that was moved to Badger Pass at an unknown date. The shed is located to the south of the Maintenance Garage. This wood frame building has a square plan and a gable roof that extends to the north to create a small, open, storage area. Currently, the building appears to be used for storage associated with the maintenance yard.

NPS Weather Station

The NPS weather station is a metal, scaffold-like structure located southeast of the Ranger Station. The structure was constructed sometime after 1953 and is currently used for collecting weather data.

NASTAR Shacks

There are two NASTAR shacks at Badger Pass which are associated with the National Standard Race (NASTAR) developed by SKI Magazine in 1968 and held weekly at Badger Pass.⁷⁸ A shack at the top of Chipmunk Ski Run marks the start of the race and one at the base of the run, directly south of the Red Fox Chair Lift, marks its end. The shacks shelter staff and race timing equipment during competitions. These portable structures are dug out after each snow storm and moved to their proper locations above the snow. Little documentary evidence is available about the NASTAR shacks.

Badger Pups Barn

The Badger Pup Barn was constructed sometime after 1953 and is located in Monroe Meadow southeast of the ski lodge. This portable, wood frame building features a gable roof and is currently used for the Yosemite Ski School.

78 “What is NASTAR” Available online: <http://www.nastar.com/>, accessed October 22, 2008.

Lift Operator Houses

There are two portable lift operator houses located throughout the Badger Pass Ski Area. The lift operator houses are simple, square-plan, wood frame shelters that are one-story in height clad in board-and-batten veneer siding and feature gable roofs clad with shingles. One of the lift operator houses is located in Monroe Meadow between the Turtle Rope Tow and Red Fox lift houses and was constructed in 1972. The other is a slightly larger building located at the top of the Eagle Ski Run south of the Eagle lift house and constructed in 1985. This one-story, rectangular-plan, wood frame building features a shed roof and vertical wood siding.

Ski Lifts

There are five ski lifts in operation at the Badger Pass Ski Area. These include (from west to east) the Bruin Double-Chair Lift (1981) to the Bruin Ski Run; the Badger Double-Chair Lift (1973, scheduled replacement in summer 2009) to the Badger Ski Run; the Red Fox Double-Chair lift (1973) and Eagle Triple-Chair Lift (1986, renovated 2008) which serve the Red Fox and Eagle Ski Runs; and the Turtle Rope Tow (1974) to the Turtle Ski Run. The ski lifts move visitors throughout the site and allow skiers to access the upper levels of the downhill ski runs.

Views and Vistas

The Badger Pass Ski Area was designed to provide both inward and outward views of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and the surrounding scenic landscape. These views include views from the Badger Pass Ski Lodge to the ski runs, as well as from the ski runs to the lodge and surrounding landscape. Today, some of the views of the landscape have been partially obscured by mature vegetation and the addition of above-ground ski lifts after the period of significance. These ski lifts generally replaced earlier ski tows and lifts and were sited in the same location as earlier ski tows and lifts. Ski tows and lifts have been part of the visual experience of Badger Pass since the beginning of the period of significance. Additions and alterations to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge have altered views to the lodge from the ski runs. The most expansive views to the surrounding mountains and within the ski area remain. Many of the views and vistas associated with the Badger Pass Ski Area are still apparent and appear much as they did during the period of significance and continue to contribute to the historic character of the site.

Vista from Badger Pass Access Road to Lodge

Historically, a carefully designed vista framed the Badger Pass Ski Lodge from the Badger Pass Access Road. This vista highlighted the lodge as the centerpiece of the ski area and dates to 1935 when the lodge was constructed. Currently, the view of the historic lodge is obscured by additions, ancillary buildings, structures, and utilities that were added to the west of the lodge.

Views from Badger Pass Ski Lodge to slopes

There is an expansive view from the south deck of the lodge to the meadow to the south and the ski runs above. From this vantage point, from west to east, are the Turtle, Beaver, Rabbit, Eagle, Red Fox, Wildcat, Chipmunk, Badger and Bruin Downhill Ski Runs as well as the associated lifts and vegetation that frame these runs. Currently, the Temporary Downhill Equipment Rental Trailer partially obstructs the view from the lodge to the Rabbit and Beaver Ski Runs. This view dates to the construction of the lodge in 1935 and currently appears much as it did at the end of the period of significance in 1953; as the overall configuration and character of the ski runs has not dramatically changed.

Views from slopes to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge

Historic photographs show that framed views from the ski slopes to the lodge have always been a focal point of the downhill skiing experience at Badger Pass. These views were created when the ski lodge was constructed in 1935. Views from the ski slopes to the lodge also help orient visitors skiing on the ski runs.

Due to the alterations to the Badger Pass Ski Lodge and its resulting change in appearance, the views to the lodge from the ski runs have dramatically changed over time. The once elegant views to the lodge have been compromised by later additions to the building, which have changed the exterior appearance of the lodge. Views to the lodge have also been partially obscured by the construction of non-contributing structures in the maintenance yard. Despite changes to the appearance of the lodge over time, the location of the lodge has remained unchanged and the views from the slopes to the lodge are still present today.

View from Old Badger Pass Summit to surrounding landscape

The view from the Old Badger Pass Summit oriented visitors to the surrounding Yosemite National Park including views to Mount Kness, Mount Clark, Red Peak Pass and Ostrander Lake. Old Badger Pass Summit was the focal point of the original Badger Pass ski field, and pre-dated construction of the Badger Pass Ski Lodge in 1935. This view dates to circa 1933, when skiing at the Badger Pass ski fields was first officially documented by the NPS.

The ski run from this peak is no longer groomed as a downhill ski run and is only accessible via the Snowshoe Trail at the northeast extent of the project boundary. This view was an important feature within the Badger Pass Ski Area early in the history of the site, and is currently accessible only to hikers, cross-country skiers and snowshoers who may access this view from the Snowshoe Trail.

View from top of Eagle Ski Run to surrounding landscape

The view from the top of the Eagle Ski Run gave a sense of the location of the Badger Pass Ski Area within greater Yosemite National Park. At approximately 7,800 feet in elevation, this view, at the highest point of the Badger Pass Ski Area, provided a dramatic overview of the Yosemite landscape. The view dates to circa 1940; when historic maps show that the up-ski was improved to provide visitors access to this peak. Today, the view from the top of the Eagle Ski Run is largely obscured by large trees to the north and west.

View from top of Badger Ski Run to surrounding landscape

Historically, the sweeping view from the top of the Badger Ski Run to Mount Hoffman helped orient visitors within the greater Yosemite National Park. This view dates to circa 1940, when historic maps show an up-ski provided access to this peak and would have allowed for visitors to experience the expansive view. Today, the view from the top of the Badger Ski Run is largely obscured by large trees to the north and west.



View from Badger Pass Ski Lodge to slopes. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008.



View from slopes to Badger Pass Ski Lodge. Source: Jim Vandenberg, 2009.



View from top of Eagle Ski Run to surrounding mountains. Source: Page & Turnbull, 2008.

Summary Table of Landscape Features

Feature	Date Constructed	Contributing/ Non-Contributing/ Association
<i>Natural Systems & Features</i>		
Monroe Meadow	n/a	Associated with setting
Grouse Creek	n/a	Associated with setting
Little Half Dome	n/a	Associated with setting
Spring	n/a	Associated with setting
Wetlands	n/a	Associated with setting
Rock outcrops	n/a	Associated with setting
Old Badger Pass Summit	n/a	Associated with setting
<i>Land Use</i>		
Badger Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Beaver Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Bruin Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Chipmunk Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Eagle Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Gray Owl Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Rabbit Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Red Fox Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Turtle Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Wildcat Run	ca. 1935	Associated with setting
Old Badger Pass Run	ca. 1933	Associated with setting
<i>Circulation</i>		
Badger Pass Access Road	1935	Contributing
Original Parking Loop	1936	Contributing
1941 Parking Loop (Expansion 1)	1941	Contributing

Snowshoe Trail	ca. 1935	Contributing
Old Glacier Point Road Cross Country Ski Trail	1882	Contributing
Trailhead to Glacier Point Road Cross Country Ski Trail	ca. 1933	Contributing
1958 Parking Loop (Expansion 2)	1958	Non-Contributing
ca. 1987 Parking Loop (Expansion 3)	ca. 1987	Non-Contributing
Maintenance Roads and Trails	Post-1953	Non-Contributing
Turkey Trails	Post-1953	Non-Contributing
Cross Country Trail	ca. 1986	Non-Contributing
<i>Vegetation</i>		
Monroe Meadow	n/a	Associated with setting
Stands of Conifers at boundary	n/a	Associated with setting
Plantings between ski runs	n/a	Associated with setting
Screen plantings around Parking Loops	n/a	Associated with setting
<i>Buildings & Structures</i>		
Badger Pass Ski Lodge	1935	Contributing
NPS Ranger Residence	1940	Contributing
Water Tower	ca. 1988	Non-Contributing
NPS Ranger Station (moved to site)	Date of original construction unknown, 1969 moved to Badger Pass from Foresta	Non-Contributing
Cross-Country Equipment Rental Building	ca. 1986	Non-Contributing
Maintenance Garage and storage containers	ca. 1980	Non-Contributing
Maintenance Shed (moved to site)	ca. 1971	Non-Contributing
NPS Weather Station	Post-1953	Non-Contributing

NASTAR shack - start point	ca. 1968	Non-Contributing
NASTAR shack - end point	ca. 1968	Non-Contributing
Badger Pups Barn	Post-1953	Non-Contributing
Lift Operator House #1 (Red Fox Run)	1972	Non-Contributing
Lift Operator House #2 (Badger Run)	1985	Non-Contributing
Badger Double-Chair Lift	1973, scheduled replacement summer 2009	Non-Contributing
Red Fox Double-Chair Lift	1973	Non-Contributing
Turtle Rope Tow	1974, moved to current location 1986	Non-Contributing
Bruin Double-Chair Lift	1981	Non-Contributing
Eagle Triple-Chair Lift	1986, renovated 2008.	Non-Contributing
<i>Views and Vistas</i>		
Vista from Badger Pass Access Road to Lodge upon entry	1935	Associated with setting
View from Badger Pass Ski Lodge to slopes	1935	Associated with setting
Views from slopes to Badger Pass Ski Lodge	1935	Associated with setting
View from Old Badger Pass Summit to surrounding landscape	ca. 1933	Associated with setting
View from top of Eagle Ski Run to surrounding landscape	ca. 1940	Associated with setting
View from top of Badger Ski Run to surrounding landscape	ca. 1940	Associated with setting

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